DETROIT METRO TIMES

VOL. 46 | ISSUE 09 | FEBRUARY 18-MARCH 3, 2026

A DETROIT DRAMA

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BY KAHN SANTORI DAVISON

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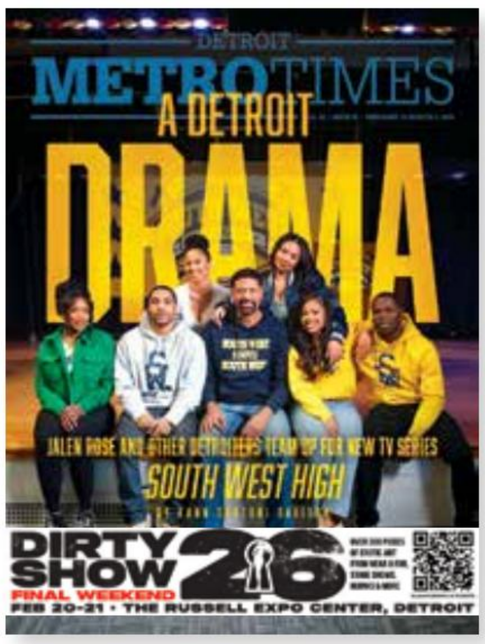
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SOUTH WEST HIGH
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Feedback

Readers react to last issue's cover story about photographer Chas Ray Krider, who is exhibiting rare early photos of Dita Von Teese at Detroit's Dirty Show.

So excited to see this
—@noellenurmi, Instagram

How exciting! 🖤
—@mycroft7, Instagram

Chas Ray Krider ...I'm waiting for your book. 📕✍️👶❤️👨
—@mystifyingmark, Instagram

Praise be 🔥
—@tsurisrex, Instagram

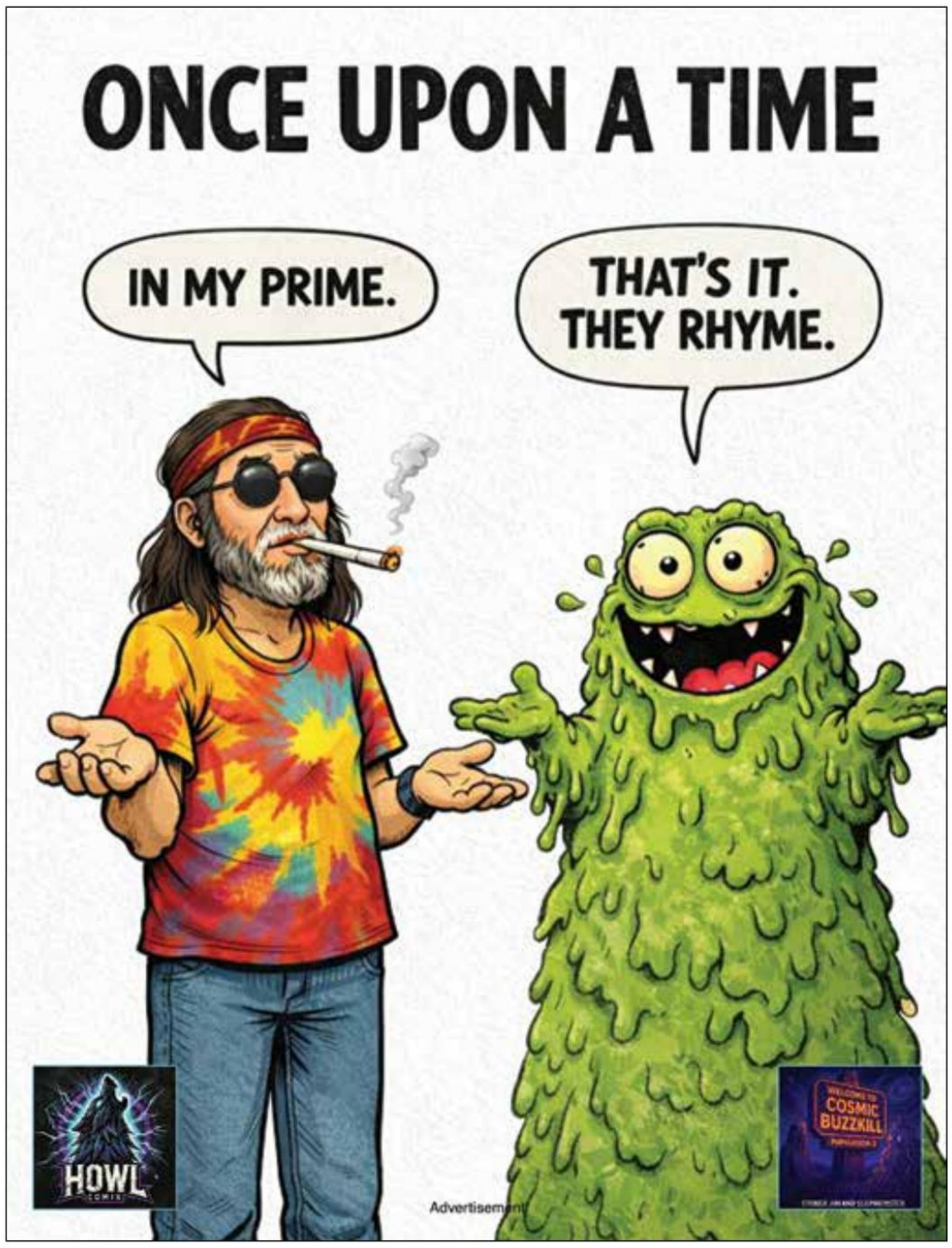
Readers also reacted to the new size of our print edition.

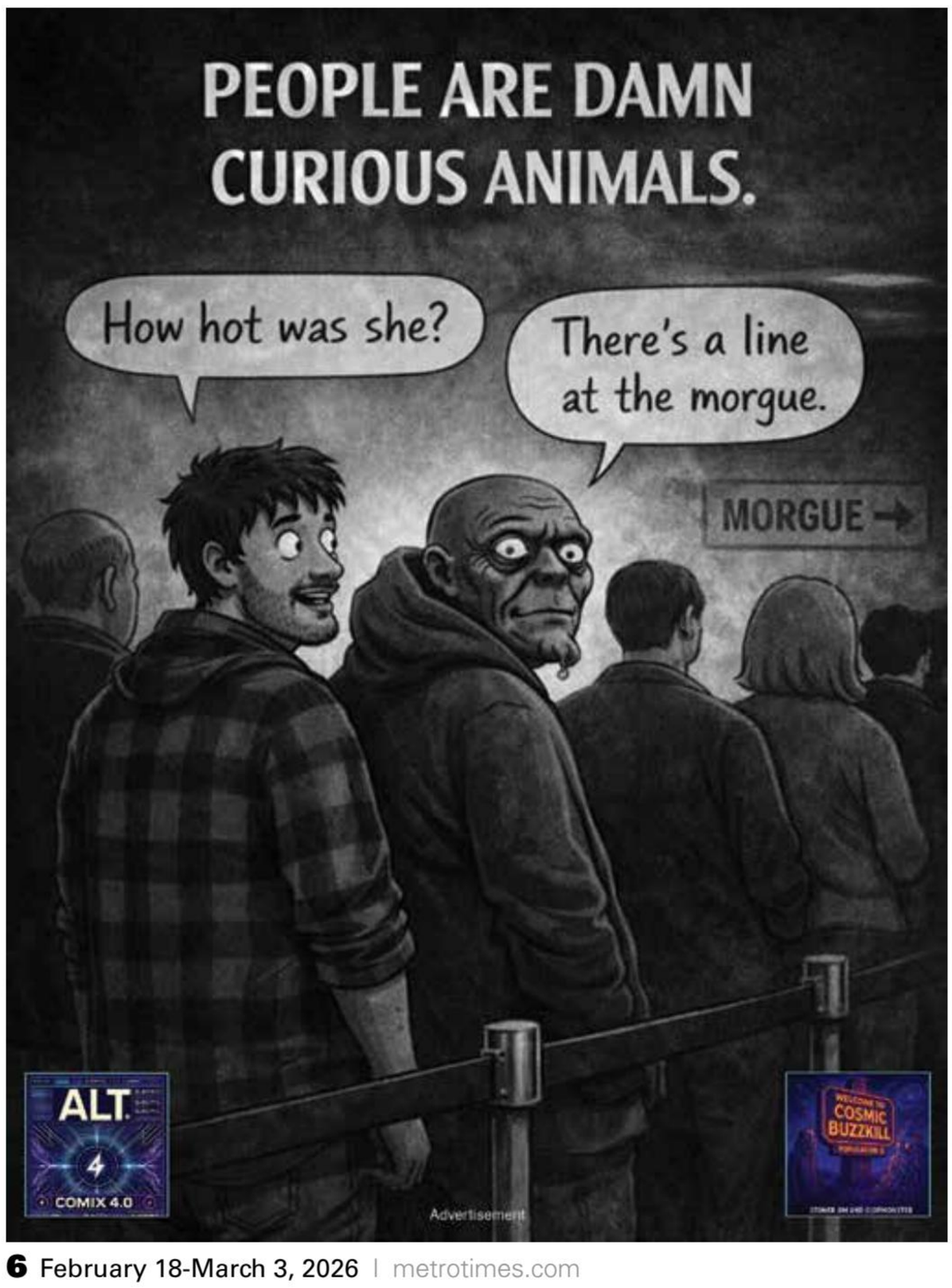
I know all of the mega long time readers like myself are getting old but.. we still dig the physical copies! Larger print for my old ass!! Whooo!
—Todd Feick, Facebook

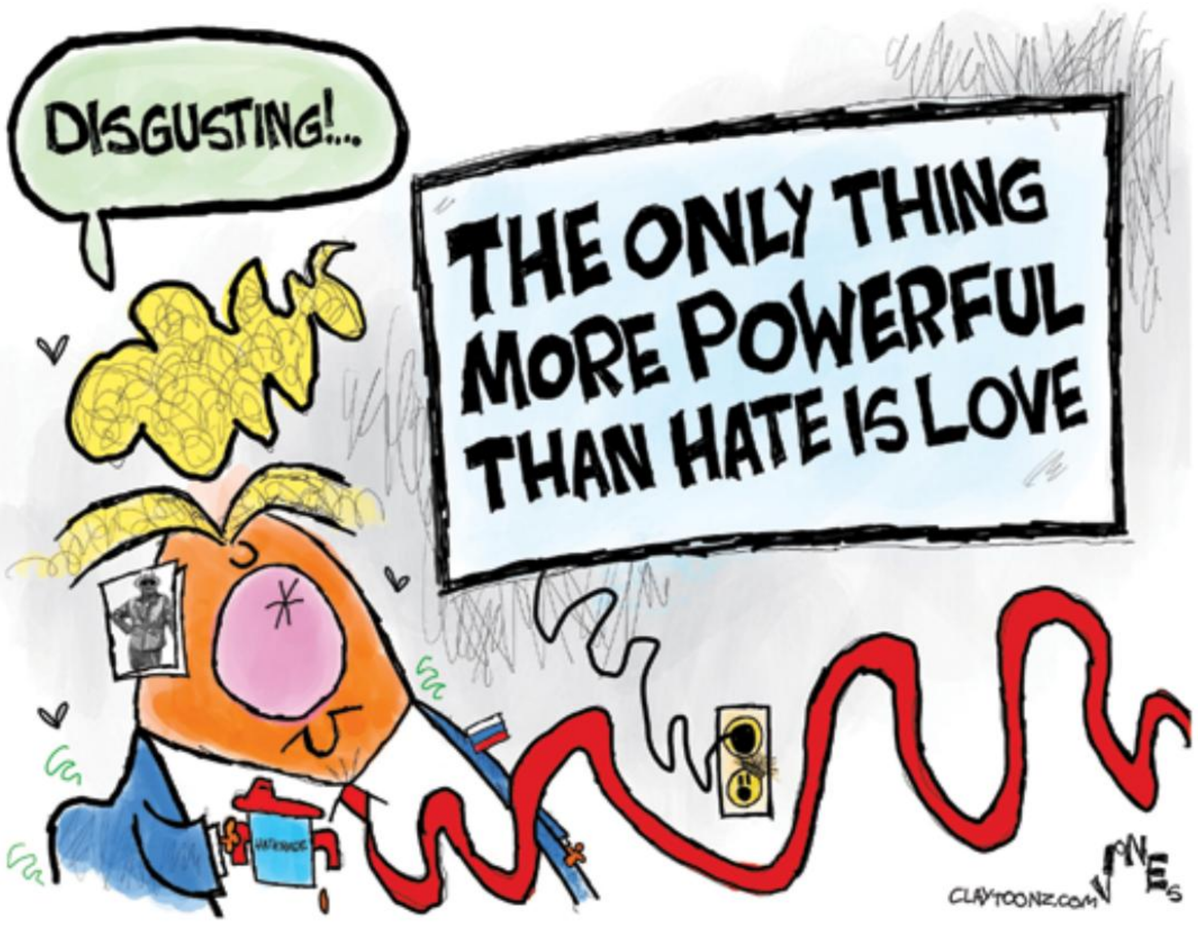
that's helpful
—Tina Koppal, Facebook

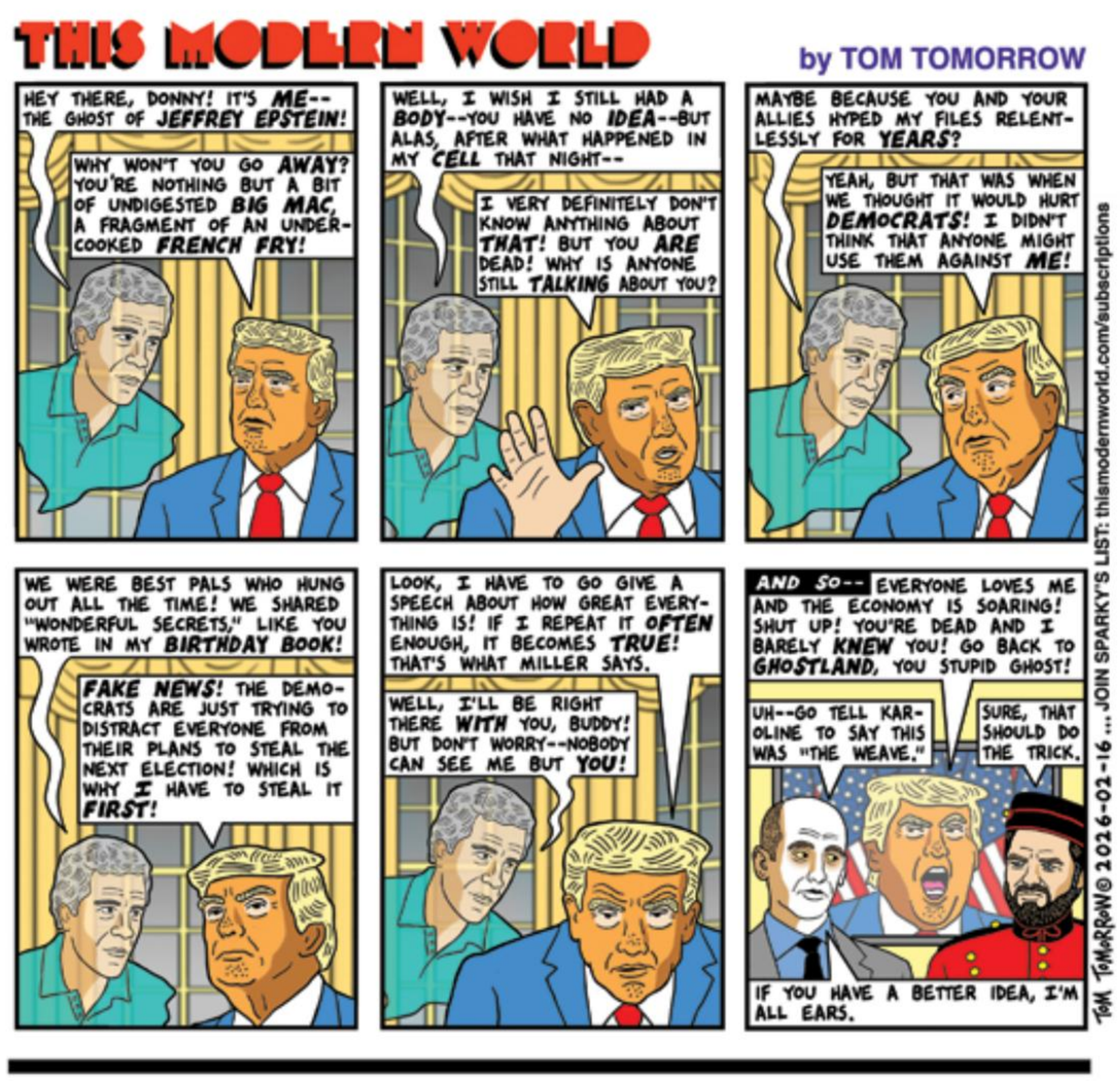
Fish wrapper and puppy crate lining. Not even fit for that.
—Daniel Glezack, Facebook

Have an opinion? Sound off! Note our new email address: tips@detroitmetrotimes.com. MT








THIS MODERN WORLD
by TOM TOMORROW
HEY THERE, DONNY! IT'S ME-- THE GHOST OF JEFFREY EPSTEIN!
WHY WON'T YOU GO AWAY? YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A BIT OF UNDIGESTED BIG MAC, A FRAGMENT OF AN UNDER-COOKED FRENCH FRY!
WELL, I WISH I STILL HAD A BODY--YOU HAVE NO IDEA--BUT ALAS, AFTER WHAT HAPPENED IN MY CELL THAT NIGHT--
I VERY DEFINITELY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT! BUT YOU ARE DEAD! WHY IS ANYONE STILL TALKING ABOUT YOU?
MAYBE BECAUSE YOU AND YOUR ALLIES HYPED MY FILES RELENT-LESSLY FOR YEARS?
YEAH, BUT THAT WAS WHEN WE THOUGHT IT WOULD HURT DEMOCRATS! I DIDN'T THINK THAT ANYONE MIGHT USE THEM AGAINST ME!
WE WERE BEST PALS WHO HUNG OUT ALL THE TIME! WE SHARED "WONDERFUL SECRETS," LIKE YOU WROTE IN MY BIRTHDAY BOOK!
FAKE NEWS! THE DEMO-CRATS ARE JUST TRYING TO DISTRACT EVERYONE FROM THEIR PLANS TO STEAL THE NEXT ELECTION! WHICH IS WHY I HAVE TO STEAL IT FIRST!
LOOK, I HAVE TO GO GIVE A SPEECH ABOUT HOW GREAT EVERY-THING IS! IF I REPEAT IT OFTEN ENOUGH, IT BECOMES TRUE! THAT'S WHAT MILLER SAYS.
WELL, I'LL BE RIGHT THERE WITH YOU, BUDDY! BUT DON'T WORRY--NOBODY CAN SEE ME BUT YOU!
AND SO-- EVERYONE LOVES ME AND THE ECONOMY IS SOARING! SHUT UP! YOU'RE DEAD AND I BARELY KNEW YOU! GO BACK TO GHOSTLAND, YOU STUPID GHOST!
UH--GO TELL KAR-OLINE TO SAY THIS WAS "THE WEAVE."
SURE, THAT SHOULD DO THE TRICK.
IF YOU HAVE A BETTER IDEA, I'M ALL EARS.
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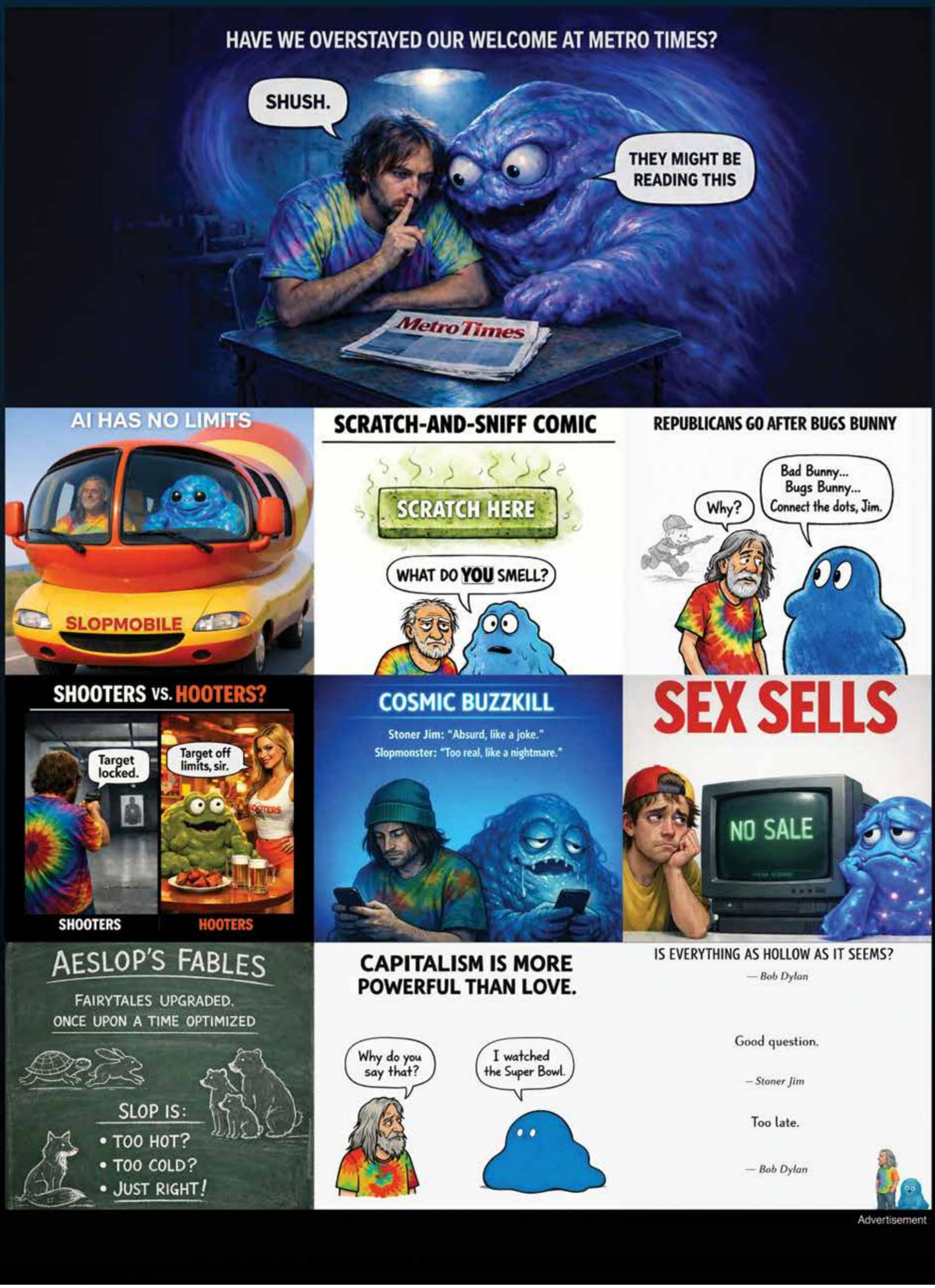
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Slopmonster: "Too real, like a nightmare."
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FAIRYTALES UPGRADED.
ONCE UPON A TIME OPTIMIZED
SLOP IS:
• TOO HOT?
• TOO COLD?
• JUST RIGHT!
CAPITALISM IS MORE POWERFUL THAN LOVE.
Why do you say that?
I watched the Super Bowl.
IS EVERYTHING AS HOLLOW AS IT SEEMS?
— Bob Dylan
Good question.
— Stoner Jim
Too late.
— Bob Dylan
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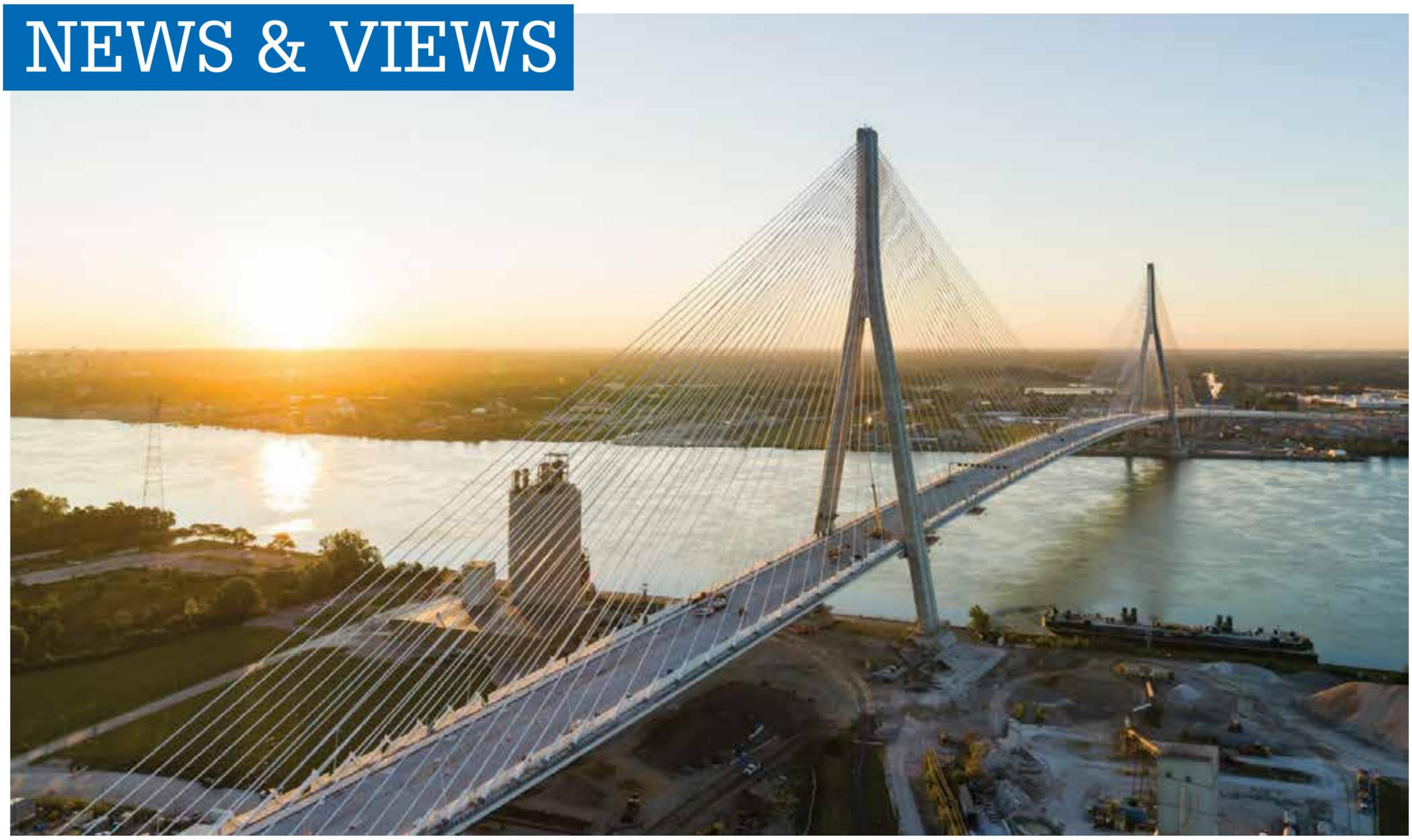

The Gordie Howe International Bridge. COURTESY PHOTO

Trump's Gordie Howe bridge scheme is pure oligarchy

President Donald Trump's threat to block the opening of the publicly owned Gordie Howe International Bridge stands to benefit one politically connected billionaire family.

The Morouns, who own the rival Ambassador Bridge, have spent years and millions of dollars lobbying, funding campaigns, and backing a ballot measure to stop the publicly financed crossing from ever opening.

The new bridge, financed by Canada and jointly owned by Canada and Michigan, was set to open later this year.

The Moroun family spent more than $33 million in 2012 backing a statewide ballot proposal aimed at blocking the publicly owned bridge, an effort that failed when voters rejected it by a 59% to 41% margin. The Morouns, who are major Republican donors, have also donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to state and federal politicians and political committees who have opposed the new bridge.

Matthew T. Moroun, the son and business heir to the Moroun family's transportation empire and the primary manager of the Ambassador Bridge company, donated more than $605,000 to Trump's campaign and Trump Victory, a joint fundraising committee for Trump's campaign and the Republican Party, since 2019.

The long political influence appears to be paying off. Recipients of the donations are embracing Trump's threats, including state House Speaker Matt Hall, U.S. Rep. John James, and U.S. Senate candidate Mike Rogers, despite the harm that could come to Michigan if the bridge doesn't open.

Meanwhile, Democrats, business groups, and former Republican Gov. Rick Snyder warned that blocking the bridge would damage Michigan's economy and supply chains while primarily benefiting the Moroun family.

James, a leading Republican candidate for governor, received $34,300 in donations from Moroun during his congressional run in 2022 and 2023, according to campaign finance records. He also received $11,000 from Moroun during his U.S. Senate race in 2020.

James praised Trump's approach and defended the use of the bridge as leverage in trade negotiations with Canada, even as state and federal officials warned that disrupting one of North America's busiest trade corridors could drive up costs for Michigan manufacturers and consumers.

"President Trump understands how vital it is not only for our economy but also for our national security to make sure that our neighbors are aware of that," James said on WOOD Radio's West Michigan Live. "President Trump is using every means and method at his disposal to secure America's economy and our national security."

Campaign finance records show Hall is also one of the Michigan Republicans who has received significant political support from Moroun. Since 2017, Moroun has donated more than $35,000 to Hall's campaign committee, according to campaign finance records.

Moroun has also given another $35,000 to the Matt Hall Majority Fund, a leadership committee created to support Hall and allied House candidates. In addition, Moroun made a direct $1,000 contribution to Hall's state House campaign in 2019.

Hall, one of the most vocal defenders of Trump's bridge threat, argues the move would strengthen the U.S.'s negotiating position with Canada. At the same time, he has acknowledged that the Moroun family owns the competing bridge and has suggested their company could be harmed by potential Canadian retaliation.

"I was supportive of the president's tweet," Hall told *The Detroit News*. "I think we need to renegotiate some of these deals with Canada, and he's the ultimate deal maker."

Hall also said the Ambassador Bridge is "owned by an American" company and "a lot of people were happy with just one bridge."

Rogers, who also defended Trump's threat, and an affiliate group, Securing America's Future PAC, received more than $21,000 from the Moroun family.

Moroun has also been a major donor to other Michigan Republicans who have played visible roles in opposing or questioning the new bridge over the years. State Rep. Matt Maddock, a longtime Trump ally who endorsed Trump's threat, previously received $6,000 in campaign donations from Moroun and repeatedly opposed the new span.

The Morouns have also donated heavily to local politicians in Detroit, where the American side of the bridge is located. Former Duggan Mayor Mike Duggan, who is running for governor as an independent, received more than $100,000 from the Morouns. The family also donated nearly $200,000 to Detroit City Council members and candidates using political action committees ahead of the 2017 election, a year before construction was to begin on the bridge. Neither Duggan nor city council members have commented publicly about Trump's threat.

Snyder, who negotiated the 2012 agreement with Canada that allowed the Gordie Howe bridge to be built without Michigan taxpayer funding, wrote in a *Detroit News* op-ed that stopping the bridge would primarily create "one big winner": the Moroun family.

Snyder, economists, and state officials said Trump's threat would undercut Michigan's economy while shielding a private monopoly at the Detroit-Windsor border.

"Trump started a reckless trade war, punched our state's largest trading partner in the teeth, and is now trying to punish Michiganders even further for the chaos he created," Michigan Democratic Party Chair Curtis Hertel said Tuesday. "Threatening to arbitrarily block the bridge from opening would amount to economic sabotage against Michigan, leading to higher prices, fewer jobs, and greater uncertainty for our state's auto industry."

He added, "Michigan Republicans at every level need to pick a side: Trump's chaos, or standing up for Michigan workers who shouldn't have to suffer because of this disastrous trade war."

In a high-profile speech last month at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney urged nations to seek new trade agreements outside of U.S. dependence as he pursued new trade deals with China. Trump's tariffs on Canada have caused prices to increase and led to a Canadian boycott of U.S. business.

"When the rules no longer protect you, you must protect yourself," he said.

—Steve Neavling

El-Sayed stands alone in Michigan's Senate race by calling to abolish ICE

The three Democrats vying for Michigan's open U.S. Senate seat agree that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has grown increasingly brutal under President Donald Trump, but they are sharply divided over whether the agency can be fixed at all.

Abdul El-Sayed, a former Wayne County public health director and progressive Democrat, is the only candidate calling for ICE to be abolished. U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens, a center-left Democrat from Birmingham, says ICE should continue to exist but argues the agency needs major reforms and tighter oversight. And state Sen. Mallory McMorrow of Royal Oak also rejects abolition, saying ICE has a legitimate role but must be "vastly reformed."

The dispute has turned ICE into a defining issue in the Democratic primary ahead of the Aug. 4 election. For Democrats nationally, the Senate seat is a must-in if the party is going to seize control of the chamber in November. That makes the Democratic primary all the more important as ICE continues to arrest, assault, and kill American citizens without recourse, while doing the same to undocumented immigrants at cruel and unprecedented levels.

Since escalating deportation raids in September, federal immigration officers have shot at least 13 people nationwide.

The leading Republican candidate, Mike Rogers, is zealously in support of ICE and even accepted contributions from private prison companies that contract with ICE to detain immigrants.

El-Sayed calls ICE "irredeemable" and pushes abolition

For El-Sayed, the debate over ICE is a moral one. Following the federal law enforcement killings of Renée Good and Alex Pretti in Minneapolis, El-Sayed said in a statement that ICE "cannot operate within the bounds of the Constitution or human decency — it must be torn down and immigration enforcement must be rethought from scratch"

Retraining won't fix an agency that he says has "murdered two American citizens," terrorized communities, and morphed into a para-military force that operates with impunity.

"When I'm in the U.S. Senate, I intend to lead the effort to abolish ICE," El-Sayed said in a WDET interview that aired on Jan. 22.

El-Sayed says the U.S. can have effective border security and immigration enforcement, but it can be done by dismantling ICE and rebuilding an alternative from "scratch."

"We can have a safe and secure southern border. We can enforce immigration law," El-Sayed said. "But ICE is not about that. ICE is a paramilitary force normalizing the use of government power on peaceful streets, in thrall to one man. They are using the pretext of immigration to weaponize against the laws and norms and mores of our democracy and our Constitution itself. And I believe that it ought to be abolished."

In a statement after federal agents fatally shot Pretti on Jan. 24, El-Sayed called ICE "irredeemable" and said "retraining won't fix it."

"The only reason to deny this is political cowardice," El-Sayed said.

McMorrow says ICE should exist, but must be "vastly reformed"

McMorrow, who entered the Senate race as a next-generation Democrat, has taken a middle position. She supports keeping ICE but wants to force it back toward its stated mission through oversight, funding leverage, and stricter accountability.

In a WDET interview aired on Jan. 9, McMorrow was asked directly whether ICE should exist.

"Yes, and it needs to be vastly reformed," she responded.

McMorrow argued ICE is essential to keep Michigan residents safe.

"Michigan is a border state," McMorrow said. "We need Immigration and Customs Enforcement to do the work of what and who comes across the border. That should be its job. Its job should not be to unleash on communities to terrorize people, to go after people whose skin color isn't exactly right, or who have an accent."

McMorrow has also supported using Congress's spending power to force the agency to change. She has laid out specific policy changes that she wants to see tied to reforming ICE.

In a Jan. 27 campaign video, she said the agency has "gone completely rogue" and urged Congress to leverage DHS funding votes to demand meaningful changes, including firing recently hired agents who don't meet basic law enforcement standards, requiring clear identification and banning masks, ending warrantless home entries, and ensuring strict use-of-force policies with real consequences for violations.

McMorrow also said ICE should prioritize dangerous criminals rather than detaining people without criminal convictions, and called for protections for sensitive locations like schools and churches as part of an overhaul.

Stevens backs reforms and Noem impeachment after voting for "gratitude" measure

Stevens has recently adopted harsh language to describe ICE in the field, calling the agency "out of control," and supporting an effort to impeach Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem.

"Secretary Noem has refused to answer basic questions to Congress about ICE operations," Stevens said in a Jan. 21 statement announcing her support for Noem's impeachment.

On Jan. 25, Stevens said she would co-sponsor legislation aimed at redirecting what she described as ICE's "$75 billion slush fund" to state and local law enforcement programs.

But Stevens's record includes a vote that has been a turnoff for many voters. In June 2025, she broke with most Democrats and voted in favor of a House resolution that "expresses gratitude to law enforcement officers, including U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel, for protecting the homeland."

Abdul El-Sayed. COURTESY PHOTO

Her position on ICE has changed as voters have become increasingly incensed with the agency's violent and often unconstitutional tactics.

In a statement following the death of Pretti, Stevens said "ICE is out of control" and called for stronger accountability, urging federal agents to listen to local officials and leave Minneapolis. Her statement described the repeated shootings and routine use of force as "flat-out wrong and against everything this country stands for."

Corporate PAC money divides the field

The three Democrats are also split over campaign funding.

El-Sayed and McMorrow have pledged not to take corporate political action committee (PAC) money, while Stevens has accepted contributions from corporate PACs representing health care and other businesses. Stevens has also received a lot of support from pro-Israel PACs and affiliated political groups, including the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC).

Her support for Israel has drawn criticism from many of the same progressives who are calling for the abolition of ICE.

As Stevens says she's the right Democrat to confront Trump's second-term immigration crackdown, her earlier approach to the president's impeachment has raised red flags. Stevens was the last Michigan Democrat in Congress who had not yet committed to supporting an impeachment inquiry.

Public opinion shifts as ICE gets more brutal

The candidates' differing approaches to ICE come as national polling suggests many Americans are fed up with the agency's brutality and lack of accountability.

Sixty-five percent of Americans now say ICE has "gone too far" in enforcing immigration laws, an 11-point jump since last summer, according to the latest NPR/PBS News/Marist poll. Six in 10 disapprove of the job ICE is doing, and nearly the same share says the agency is making Americans less safe. A 59% majority also say mass protests against ICE are mostly legitimate.

The shift is being driven largely by independents and Democrats, while Trump's approval rating stands at 39%, with 56% disapproving and 51% strongly disapproving, the poll found.

The poll numbers suggest that Democrats who are weak on ICE will have trouble in the primary elections.

While El-Sayed has the longest and most consistent record of opposing ICE's tactics, McMorrow and Stevens are ratcheting up their rhetoric.

Whether their positions on ICE will become a significant factor in the election won't be known until August.

A new Emerson College Polling survey suggests the primary remains wide open, with McMorrow narrowly leading Stevens and El-Sayed, while a large share of voters remain undecided. The Jan. 29 poll of likely Democratic primary voters found 22.4% backing McMorrow, 16.5% supporting Stevens, and 15.9% favoring El-Sayed, while 37.9% said they were undecided and 7.3% backed other candidates.

—Steve Neavling

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
15 **sunday karaoke** WITH MATT THE MILLIONAIRE	16 CLOSED	17 **tuesday karaoke** WITH MATT THE MILLIONAIRE	18	19 **POP CULTURE TRIVIA NIGHT** WITH SCOTT ZUMBERG	20 **DEATH CAT** CHOKING SUSAN DJ NITROH	21 **THE REEFERMEN** DJ SOVAIN SYLVAIN
22	23 CLOSED	24	25 **CLASSIC LOUNGE SOUNDS** WITH KESHTKAR & CO.	26	27 **MEGA WEEDGE** DJ ZAK FRIELING	28 **AMBROSIA BLUE** MILD PULP DJ RYAN GIMPERT

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JAM BANDS IN THE LOUNGE EVERY 1ST THURSDAY
POP CULTURE TRIVIA (70s-00's) EVERY 3RD THURSDAY
SKA NIGHT EVERY LAST THURSDAY (STARTING 4/24)
HAPPY HOUR EVERY FRIDAY 12-5PM (20% OFF ALL DRINKS)
INDUSTRY NIGHT EVERY SUNDAY 6-9PM (20% OFF ALL DRINKS)

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& DJ T-CON

SAT MAR 7
QUALITY CINEMA BAND
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Nicole Curtis. COURTESY PHOTO

Rehab Addict canceled as clip surfaces of star using slur

Nicole Curtis's run on HGTV seems to have come to an end.

The network abruptly canceled the new season of the Michigan-born home renovation star's popular show *Rehab Addict* last week after a leaked production clip caught her using a racial slur.

"I want to be clear: the word in question is wrong and not part of my vocabulary and never has been, and I apologize to everyone," Curtis said in a statement to TMZ.

In the clip, which was first published by the gossip website Radar Online, Curtis is seen standing on a ladder struggling to remove a piece of metal with a pair of pliers.

"Why? It's my last one," she whines, adding, "Oh, fart [n-word]."

Curtis appears to immediately regret the slip, saying, "What the fuck is that I just said?"

Amid laughter from the crew, she then requests for the footage to be deleted.

"Can you kill that?" she asks.

"No, I've got 35 minutes," an offscreen voice says. "I can't kill it."

"Fuck my life," Curtis responds.

Radar Online reported that the clip is believed to have been filmed about two years ago during a project in Wyoming, and suggested it surfaced due to disgruntled staff.

"When something happens, we all know about it... this footage has made it around to the [production] community she [has] screwed over," a source told the outlet, adding, "You deserve everything you get. Treat us with dignity and respect, and quit making money off of our backs... You are a trash human."

Metro Times reached out to Curtis for comment, who only agreed to speak to a reporter of her choosing. *Metro Times* declined the request.

Curtis, who was born in Lake Orion, a suburb of Detroit, launched her show in 2010 as she embarked in a career in real estate. Her show and its spinoffs have frequently featured Michigan properties, including the historic Ransom Gillis home in Detroit's Brush Park neighborhood.

The scrapped new season was billed as featuring a renovation of a "disgusting" squatter-filled "crackhouse" in the city.

In addition to shelving the new episodes, the *Rehab Addict* catalog was also removed from streaming services HBO Max and Discovery+.

"HGTV was recently made aware of an offensive racial comment made during the filming of Rehab Addict," the network said in a statement. "Not only is language like this hurtful and disappointing to our viewers, partners, and employees — it does not align with the values of HGTV."

It continued, "Accordingly, we have removed the series from all HGTV platforms. We remain dedicated to fostering a culture of respect and inclusion across our content and our workplace."

There were also reportedly issues behind the scenes that presaged *Rehab Addict*'s abrupt return — and disappearance — from the air.

According to realtor.com, Curtis decided to pull the show mid-season in July 2025 to reshoot and recut the remainder of the episodes, citing a desire to spend more time with her family.

Then, in a Feb. 8 Instagram post, she announced the imminent return of *Rehab Addict* — months ahead of schedule.

"Straight from Detroit—the new episodes drop Wednesday ... was told now or never—so you get them now," she wrote. "And can you do me a huge show of support by sharing this. Sending it to friends, tag a friend, a stranger."

The show was also moved to the afternoon, a perceived downgrade according to some fans considering its previous primetime evening slot.

In response to comments from fans asking about the schedule change, Curtis hinted at drama with HGTV, writing, "Brilliant question to which I've received no answer that makes sense to me."

In a statement posted Wednesday to her Instagram page, Curtis teased that she will tell her side of the story.

"There is more to this, but my family comes first and I need to be a mom right now more than anything else," she wrote. "I will take the time to be as I've always been with you, transparent and honest."

—Lee DeVito

A bigger *Metro Times* print edition

No, you're not tripping!

If you picked up a copy of the previous issue of *Detroit Metro Times* with the stunning Dita Von Teese on the cover you might notice things look a little bit different than they did before.

We switched to a new printer, resulting in a larger page size of 11 inches by 14.5 inches — bigger than our previous size of 10 inches by 12.5 inches.

The paper quality is also a bit heavier and the colors look a bit brighter, and with a new staple-less design we will be able to print more copies and increase our distribution in the Detroit area.

If you haven't picked up a copy in a while, you can take a look at our list of locations carrying *Detroit Metro Times* to see for yourself.

Interested in advertising with us, distributing our paper at your business, or passing along a story tip to our reporters? You can reach us at tips@detroitmetrotimes.com.

Detroit Metro Times is now distributed every other week.

Thanks for reading!

—Lee DeVito

Jalen Rose. KAHN SANTORI DAVISON

Towanda Braxton and Dawn HalfKenny behind the scenes. KAHN SANTORI DAVISON

A DETROIT DRAMA

JALEN ROSE TEAMS UP WITH PISTONS OWNER FOR NEW TV SERIES *SOUTH WEST HIGH*

BY KAHN SANTORI DAVISON

It's a jovial mood at Detroit's Jalen Rose Leadership Academy, where three dozen cast members and support staff of the television series *South West High* are gathered. Even though the series wrapped up filming several weeks ago, the creators Dennis Reed, Ty Mopkins, and Jalen Rose brought the cast back together to shoot promotional clips, photos, and just have fun. Actresses Brooklyn "Queen" Oates and Diamond Sanderfield are making TikTok videos, singer and actress Towanda Braxton is playfully telling Rose that she can beat him in basketball, actor Stevie Baggs Jr. is chasing his toddler son around the stage, and boxing legend Thomas Hearns stops by for a visit.

"It was important for all of us to come together and be a family again because a lot of times when you do a project, the project comes out, and you guys are never in the same place at the same time," Rose tells the group from the auditorium's stage. "It means a lot as a family for you guys to pull up the way you've done and we're going to make sure we do our best to make sure this is definitely going to be a success."

Since his days as a standout prep basketball player at Southwestern High School and his three seasons at the University of Michigan, Rose has been one of Detroit's proudest sons, going on to play 13 seasons in the NBA, embarking on a successful broadcasting career, and opening the Jalen Rose Leadership Academy (JRLA) in northwest Detroit in 2011. Along the way he's been a friend to Detroit's hip-hop community and a sideline fixture at both Detroit Pistons and Detroit Lions games.

"The unique thing about me as a public figure is that I never moved," he says. "So what happens for a city like Detroit, and I say this humbly — when you're watching a Lions game and the people they may show at the game don't necessarily live here. So a lot of times that becomes the disconnect."

But within Rose's plethora of on and off-the-court achievements, he still had another avenue he wanted to pursue: entertainment. In early 2025 Rose approached longtime friend and Detroit tastemaker Ty Mopkins with the idea to film a scripted series. Rose wanted it to be something that not only spoke to the youth of Detroit, but accurately represented their struggles and beauty to the rest of the world.

"Ty and I were just in the lab thinking about something that we can create that would be something special," Rose says. "And coincidentally, Ty and I both attended Southwestern High School [...] we felt like there was a space for us to do something where we can educate young people but also highlight a lot of the challenges that they needed to overcome."

The first order of business was financing. Rose wanted a big budget, so he reached out to billionaire Detroit Pistons owner Tom Gores. He decided to invest in the project, and together they formed a production company called Same Page Entertainment.

"It's really just a maturation of our relationship," Rose says. "We've been really good friends for over a decade. The Pistons, Platinum Equity, and Tom and his wife Holly have been great supporters of JRLA over the years."

The next piece was finding the right director. Rose initially wanted to use his industry contacts to reach out to someone in California or New York, but Mopkins suggested native Detroiter Dennis Reed. Over the last decade Reed has filmed over four dozen projects, built a 15-thousand square foot film studio, and has taken a leadership role in Detroit's independent film community. Reed penned a script using the now-closed Southwestern High School as a muse (school colors and all). Rose transformed parts of the JRLA into film sets, and *South West High* was brought to life.

In the series, Rose plays Nolan Thomas, a former NBA player who has been recruited by his two longtime friends and educators, Kelli Tillman (played by Towanda Braxton) and Mason (played by LeMastor Spratling), to return to his alma mater as a principal and revive the family culture that existed when they were students there. Thomas has to find solutions and manage the same issues that schools across the country deal with. There's low test scores, recreational drug use, teen pregnancy, poverty, gang violence, guns, and a couple of teachers who just don't care anymore. There's hidden messages and positive themes, but *South West High* isn't a sitcom or an afterschool special — it's a drama. Rose's portrayal of Nolan Thomas is much more Joe Clark (*Lean on Me*) than *Mr. Cooper*. He's principal Jefferson Pierce (*Black Lighting*) minus the superpowers, trying to balance family life with the needs of his students.

Rose admits he didn't take acting classes, but he's spent the better part of his life in front of a camera and leaned on his experiences. "I'm an actual educator, and president of the board, so that's my life 24/7/365," says Rose. "So I get a chance to be in the trenches day-to-day and see the good bad and ugly things that are hap-

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The cast and crew of South West High. KAHN SANTORI DAVISON

pening in public schools in Detroit, and so what we wanted to use this story to do is highlight the many things good bad and ugly the challenges the young people overcome the teachers overcome in an inner city public school dynamic and then play it out in this series."

Reed put together a strong cast of emerging stars, industry veterans, and Detroit favorites. Anna Maria Horsford (who plays Thomas's mother) has starred in everything from *Amen* to *Friday*, Stevie Baggs Jr. has been a regular in Tyler Perry projects, while Dawn Halfkenny (who plays Thomas's wife) has been a rising star for the last few years. Local talents Darius Brantley Jr. and Sarah "Chyna" Evalt have been casted, and emcee Royce da' 5'9" is the show's music director. Rapper and actor Darnell "Lil Blade" Lindsay Jr. plays a star basketball player, and Brooklyn "Queen" Oates stars as Thomas's daughter Maize (a nod to U of M).

"In the show, I'm supposed to be in a private school, but I persuade my dad to let me go to the school that, you know, that he's running . And it gets crazy," says Oates. "It's really relatable, whether it's family issues, family drama, or anything in high school. And we've all been through high school."

"I just believe that this series is going to be a number one series because it really relates to every high school," adds Braxton."You know, you have your pros, your cons, your situational situations."

Reed said the cast jelled pretty quickly, but the biggest challenge was making sure the series stayed PG.

"It was certain things Ty and Jalen wanted that were non-negotiables. One of the things was no cussing, and if you watch any of my stuff, you know we're cussing and doing the whole nine yards," Reed says through a hefty laugh.

There are also no explicit sex scenes and no uses of the n-word as Reed, Rose, and Mopkins wanted a project that could transition to network TV and other platforms in the future.

"It literally made me a much better writer," says Reed. "It made me think outside of just my New York and Detroit bag, you know what I mean? Now I'm writing and thinking, what is this kid in Palm Springs thinking? What are some of the issues that kids really go through in both inner city and suburban neighborhoods?"

Even with a sturdy budget, the trio made a conscious choice to place *South West High* on Tubi, as the scrappy streaming network has risen to be a major competitor in the streaming wars and a haven for Black indie filmmakers from Detroit. Since Fox bought Tubi in 2020 for $440 million, its value has risen to $2 billion dollars with more than 100 million monthly viewers. Reed points out that a Tubi series has never won an Emmy Award, and he wants that to change with *South West High*. Mopkins has told the cast repeatedly that he believes their lives are going to change when this show debuts, and a second season is already in the works.

The first episode will debut Monday, Feb. 23, and four more episodes will air every Monday through March 23. It's the first time in Tubi's short history that a series will not release all their episodes on the same day.

The trio is hoping to channel into that old-school nostalgia where fans had to wait a week between episodes. There will also be features from Fox 2's Maurielle Lue and rappers Skill Baby and Sada Baby.

Ultimately, Rose says he wants the city to be proud of the series but also eliminate stereotypes and misconceptions about how people view Detroit youth.

"I think people have their own narratives about how they feel schools in Detroit are," says Rose, "and I kind of think this series exposes that there's a lot of love here and there are people here that care." MT

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OPENING NIGHT PARTY
TUESDAY, MARCH 24 | 6:30–8pm
Celebrate the first night of the festival with drinks and food generously provided by Ann Arbor area businesses including Blue Llama, Café Zola, Hear.Say Brewing, Jerusalem Garden, Miss Kim, Mothfire Brewing Co., Side Biscuit, Slurping Turtle, Teahaus, and others. Live electronic music from alvin hill. Followed up with an After-Party at Knight's at 9:30pm!
FILMS IN COMPETITION 10: UKRAINIAN SHORTS
SATURDAY, MARCH 28 | 3:30 pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium
This special focus on Ukrainian films includes a poetic film essay set in purgatory; a story of survival; a search for a roommate in Budapest; a jovial rumination on love and the passage of time; the toxic legacy of a Khimprom chemical plant; and a surreal night in the wilderness.
SPECIAL PROGRAM
OUT NIGHT 25th ANNIVERSARY
SUNDAY, MARCH 29 | 2:30 pm | Michigan Theater Screening Room
Every year since 2001, the Ann Arbor Film Festival has presented Out Night, a program of films that carry unique perspectives and experiences present in the LGBTQ+ community. The first iteration of Out Night, at the 39th festival, was titled Girls Out Night and included films by Deborah Strutt, Kristin Pepe, Monica Tullia Nolan, and Barbara Hammer. Each Out Night at the festival has provided unique reflections of the ever-changing climate from within and towards the queer community. In celebration of 25 years of the Out Night program, this program brings six AAFF award-winning Out Night films together to create an expansive reflection of queer voices over the years.
All three events will take place at the Michigan Theater. Visit our website for the full schedule and to purchase tickets.
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WHAT'S GOING ON

Laith Al-Saadi performs Friday, Feb. 27 at the Token Lounge in Westland. DOUG COOMBE

MUSIC

Wednesday Feb 18

Live/Concert

Cubist Agenda 8 pm-midnight; First Place Lounge, 16921 Harper Ave, Detroit; No Cover.

The Function with DJ Dez Andres 9 pm-2 am; Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore St., Detroit; no cover.

The Bunny the Bear 6:30 pm; The Token Lounge, 28949 Joy Rd., Westland;

Cubist Agenda 8 pm-midnight; First Place Lounge, 16921 Harper Ave, Detroit; No Cover.

The Function with DJ Dez Andres 9 pm-2 am; Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore St., Detroit; no cover.

DJ/Dance

Planet Funk 7-10 pm; Spkr Box, 200 Grand River, Detroit;

Way Back Wednesdays w. DJ Righteous 8 am-11:59 pm; New Dodge Lounge, 8850 Joseph Campau Ave., Hamtramck; 5.

Karaoke/Open Mic

Hump Day Karaoke & Music Trivia 8 pm-1 am; Pronto! Royal Oak, 608 S. Washington, Royal Oak; No Cover.

Thursday Feb 19

Live/Concert

Dueling Pianos: An Interactive Entertainment Experience 8 pm-midnight; AXIS Lounge, 1777 3rd St., Detroit;

Join the Flagstar Strand Theatre for a Night of Unforgettable American Featuring Sierra Hull & The Milk Carton Kids Live on Thursday, February 19th 8 pm; Flagstar Strand Theatre For The Performing of Arts, 12 North Saginaw Street, Pontiac;

KAMERON MARLOWE 7 pm; District 142, 142 Maple St., Wyandotte;

MJ LIVE - Michael Jackson Tribute 8 pm; Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit;

Pure Intention (CHI) In-Store Concert 7-11 pm; Reware Vintage, 2965 12 Mile Road, Suite 200, Berkley; $5-10.

Sierra Hull & The Milk Carton Kids 8 pm; Flagstar Strand Theatre for the Performing Arts, 12 N. Saginaw St., Pontiac;

The Phil Collins Story 7 pm; The Fillmore, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit;

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Dueling Pianos: An Interactive Entertainment Experience 8 pm-midnight; AXIS Lounge, 1777 3rd St., Detroit;

DJ/Dance

Curated Cool 7-10 pm; Spkr Box, 200 Grand River, Detroit;

Karaoke/Open Mic

Drag Queen Karaoke 8 pm-2 am; Woodward Avenue Brewers, 22646 Woodward Ave., Ferndale; no cover.

Elixer: DJs John Ryan and GEO 8 pm-midnight; Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore St., Detroit; No cover.

Friday Feb 20

Live/Concert

Alice Peacock and Jessica Willis Fisher 8-10 pm; 20 Front Street, 20 Front St, Lake Orion; $20.

Death Cat w/ Choking Susan + DJ Nitroh (lanes) 9 pm; Bowlero Lanes & Lounge, 4209 Coolidge Hwy., Royal Oak; 0.

Jason Quick and the Age of Jive Band play Lucille's Jazz Lounge 8-11 pm; Lucille's Jazz Lounge, 1447 N Summit St, Toledo; $16.78.

JUMP - America's Van Halen Experience 7 pm; District 142, 142 Maple St., Wyandotte;

Magic Bag Presents: Sunset Blvd 7 pm; Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale;

New Edition: The New Edition Way Tour 8 pm; Little Caesars Arena, 2645 Woodward Ave., Detroit;

Saddle Up: Mardi Gras! 8 pm; Diamondback Music Hall, 49345 S. Interstate 94 Service Dr., Belleville;

Suicide Machines playing "War Profiteering Is Killing Us All" In its entirety 7 pm; Small's, 10339 Conant St., Hamtramck;

The Rush Tribute Project 6:30 pm; The Fillmore, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit;

USED CARS - A Tribute to the CARS, HYNDE SIGHT - Tribute to The Pretenders 8 pm; The Token Lounge, 28949 Joy Rd., Westland;

Your Stepdad 7 pm; The Loving Touch, 22634 Woodward Ave., Ferndale;

Suicide Machines playing "War Profiteering Is Killing Us All" In its entirety 7 pm; Small's, 10339 Conant St., Hamtramck;

DJ/Dance

Lesbian Night Hosted by DJ Nouveau third Friday of every month, noon-2 am; Pronto! Royal Oak, 608 S. Washington, Royal Oak; NO COVER.

Mother & Son "Candyland Ball" Sweetheart Dance 6-8 pm; Brighton High School, 8787 Brighton Road, Brighton; 20.

Open Air Fridays 4-10 pm; Woodbridge Pub, 5169 Trumbull St., Detroit; 0.

Saturday Feb 21

Live/Concert

Suicide Machines playing "War Profiteering Is Killing Us All" In its entirety 7 pm; Small's, 10339 Conant St., Hamtramck;

Bombs in the Garden 7 pm; Pike Room, 1 S. Saginaw, Pontiac;

A Couple of Couples: Rochelle Clark & Jason Dennie/ Shari Kane & Dave Steele 7:30 pm; MAMA's Coffeehouse at the Birmingham Unitarian Church, 38651 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills; $18-$20.

Emo Night Karaoke 7 pm; Sanctuary Detroit, 2932 Caniff St., Hamtramck;

Four Tops 8 pm; Andiamo Celebrity Showroom, 7096 E. 14 Mile Rd., Warren;

Gogol Bordello 7 pm; Garden Bowl, 4120 Woodward, Detroit;

Jackamo 7 pm; The Shelter, 431 E. Congress St., Detroit;

Magic Bag Presents: 80s vs 90s - MEGA vs CLASS 7 pm; Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale;

MANÁ: VIVIR SIN AIRE TOUR 8 pm; Little Caesars Arena, 2645 Woodward Ave., Detroit; $39.50-$299.50.

The Paul Vornhagen Quartet 8-9:45 pm; Ro Cham Beau, 3321 Michigan Avenue, Detroit; $30.

Saddle Up: Leather & Lace 8 pm; Diamondback Music Hall, 49345 S. Interstate 94 Service Dr., Belleville;

Suicide Machines playing "War Profiteering Is Killing Us All" In its entirety 7 pm; Small's, 10339 Conant St., Hamtramck;

Suicide Machines playing "War Profiteering Is Killing Us All" In its entirety wsg Her Heads On Fire 7 pm; Small's, 10339 Conant St., Hamtramck;

THE FOUR HORSEMEN - THE ULTIMATE TRIBUTE TO METALLICA 7 pm; District 142, 142 Maple St., Wyandotte;

The Nightmare - Detroit's only Alice Cooper Tribute Show 8 pm; The Token Lounge, 28949 Joy Rd., Westland;

Wooli 7:30 pm; Detroit Masonic Temple Library, 500 Temple St, Detroit;

DJ/Dance

Daddy & Daughter "Candyland Ball" Sweetheart Dance 6:30-8:30 pm; Brighton High School, 8787 Brighton Road, Brighton; 20.

The Reefermen + DJ Sovain Sylvain 9 pm; Bowlero Lanes & Lounge, 4209 Coolidge Hwy., Royal Oak; 0.

Saturday Grind 11 am-3 pm; Spkr Box, 200 Grand River, Detroit;

Sunday Feb 22

Live/Concert

A Magical Motown Christmas 5 pm; The Music Hall, 350 Madison Ave., Detroit;

Black History Celebration with the Amen Ra Dancers and Drummers 7-8:30 pm; The Hawk Theatre, 29995 W 12 Mile Rd, Farmington Hills; $15 in advance, $20 at the door.

Detroit Medical Orchestra - "Beyond" 3:30-5:30 pm; Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital, 6777 W. Maple Rd., West Bloomfield; Always Free, Open to the Public, Suggested Donation $10.

Fort Street Church & Artistic Director Michael Malis Present: Jazz Concert Series 2-3 pm; Fort Street Presbyterian Church, 631 W. Fort St., Detroit; Suggested donation of $20/person.

Phil Ogilvie's Rhythm Kings 5-8 pm; Zal Gaz Grotto Club, 2070 W. Stadium Blvd., Ann Arbor; No Cover (tipjar for the band).

Rock 'n' Shop at Showtime! Last Sunday of every month, 2-6 pm; Showtime Clothing, 9704 Joseph Campau Ave., Hamtramck; Free.

The Funeral Portrait 7 pm; The Shelter, 431 E. Congress St., Detroit;

DJ/Dance

SPKR BRNCH 11 am-3 pm; Spkr Box, 200 Grand River, Detroit;

Karaoke/Open Mic

Sunday Service Karaoke Hosted by Sister DJ Larry 8 pm-1 am; Pronto! Royal Oak, 608 S. Washington, Royal Oak; No Cover.

Sunday Service Karaoke | DJ Larry noon-1 am; Pronto! Royal Oak, 608 S. Washington, Royal Oak; No Cover.

Monday Feb 23

Live/Concert

Author & Punisher, King Yosef, Black Magnet 7 pm; Sanctuary Detroit, 2932 Caniff St., Hamtramck;

Sky Covington's Preservation of Jazz Monday Night Music Series feat. Black History Month Tributes at Aretha's Jazz Cafe 7:30-10 pm; Aretha's Jazz Cafe, 350 Madison St., Detroit; $35 - $40.

Sky Covington's Preservation of Jazz Monday Night Music Series, Tributes 7:30-10 pm; Aretha's Jazz Cafe, 350 Madison St., Detroit; $35-$40.

A Tribute to the Kings of Soul and their Songs ft. Clarence William Jr., Man & Soul Deacon (Sky Covington's Preservation of Jazz Monday Night Music Series, "Tributes" 7:30-10 pm; Aretha's Jazz Cafe, 350 Madison St., Detroit; $35.

Sky Covington's Preservation of Jazz Monday Night Music Series, Tributes 7:30-10 pm; Aretha's Jazz Cafe, 350 Madison St., Detroit; $35-$40.

DJ/Dance

Adult Skate Night 8:30-11 pm; Lexus Velodrome, 601 Mack Ave., Detroit; $5.

Tuesday Feb 24

Live/Concert

Dancing With The Stars: Live! - 2026 Tour 7:30 pm; Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit;

Freya Skye - Stars Align Tour 7 pm; The Fillmore, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit;

Primeval Well 7 pm; Sanctuary Detroit, 2932 Caniff St., Hamtramck;

Sean Blackman's In Transit 7-10 pm; Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore St., Detroit; no cover.

Sean Blackman's In Transit 7-10 pm; Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore St.,

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Detroit; no cover.

Karaoke/Open Mic

Open Mic : Art in a Fly Space 7-10 pm; Detroit Shipping Company, 474 Peterboro St., Detroit; no cover.

VIP Tuesday Night Karaoke 9 pm-1 am; Pronto! Royal Oak, 608 S. Washington, Royal Oak; No Cover.

Wednesday Feb 25

Live/Concert

Cubist Agenda 8 pm-midnight; First Place Lounge, 16921 Harper Ave, Detroit; No Cover.

The Function with DJ Dez Andres 9 pm-2 am; Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore St., Detroit; no cover.

WRIF Presents: Nothing More w/ Catch Your Breath, Archers and Doobie 5:30 pm; The Fillmore, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit;

DJ/Dance

Planet Funk 7-10 pm; Spkr Box, 200 Grand River, Detroit;

Way Back Wednesdays w. DJ Righteous 8 am-11:59 pm; New Dodge Lounge, 8850 Joseph Campau Ave., Hamtramck; 5.

Karaoke/Open Mic

Hump Day Karaoke & Music Trivia 8 pm-1 am; Pronto! Royal Oak, 608 S. Washington, Royal Oak; No Cover.

Thursday Feb 26

Live/Concert

Dueling Pianos: An Interactive Entertainment Experience 8 pm-midnight; AXIS Lounge, 1777 3rd St., Detroit;

All You Need is George , 6:30 pm; Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak;

Dueling Pianos: An Interactive Entertainment Experience 8 pm-midnight; AXIS Lounge, 1777 3rd St., Detroit;

In Tha Fest Presents - Baby Kia , 8 pm; The Loving Touch, 22634 Woodward Ave., Ferndale;

Miguel: CAOS Tour , 8:30 pm; Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit;

Phamily And Friends Tour , 8 pm; Sanctuary Detroit, 2932 Caniff St., Hamtramck;

DJ/Dance

Curated Cool 7-10 pm; Spkr Box, 200 Grand River, Detroit;

Karaoke/Open Mic

Drag Queen Karaoke 8 pm-2 am; Woodward Avenue Brewers, 22646 Woodward Ave., Ferndale; no cover.

Elixer: DJs John Ryan and GEO 8 pm-midnight; Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore St., Detroit; No cover.

Friday Feb 27

Live/Concert

Detronika 9 pm; Sanctuary Detroit, 2932 Caniff St., Hamtramck;

Emo Night Brooklyn (18+) 8 pm; Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress St., Detroit;

Laith Al- Saadi 8 pm; The Token Lounge, 28949 Joy Rd., Westland;

Magic Bag Presents: Domestic Problems 7 pm; Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale;

Mega Weedge (Ween Tribute) + DJ Zak Frieling 9 pm; Bowlero Lanes & Lounge, 4209 Coolidge Hwy., Royal Oak; 0.

The Wood Brothers 7 pm; Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak;

DJ/Dance

Emo Night Brooklyn Feb. 27, 8-10 pm; Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress St., Detroit; $24.00.

Open Air Fridays 4-10 pm; Woodbridge Pub, 5169 Trumbull St., Detroit; 0.

Saturday Feb 28

Live/Concert

Ambrosia Blue w/ Mild Pulp + DJ Ryan Gimpert 9 pm; Bowlero Lanes & Lounge, 4209 Coolidge Hwy., Royal Oak; 0.

BAD OMENS: DO YOU FEEL LOVE NORTH AMERICAN TOUR 7 pm; Little Caesars Arena, 2645 Woodward Ave., Detroit;

Cat Power: The Greatest Tour 7 pm; Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress St., Detroit;

Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark™ Live in Concert 7:30-10 pm; FIM Whiting Auditorium, 1241 E. Kearsley Street, Flint; $40-$97.

Lauren Spencer Smith: THE ART OF BEING A MESS TOUR 7 pm; The Fillmore, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit;

Magic Bag Presents: MEGA 80s 7 pm; Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale;

Olivia Van Goor Quartet 8-9:45 pm; Ro Cham Beau, 3321 Michigan Avenue, Detroit; $30.

Prove It Fest 5 pm; Sanctuary Detroit, 2932 Caniff St., Hamtramck;

Ruel 7 pm; Detroit Masonic Temple Library, 500 Temple St, Detroit;

Saddle Up: Neon Nashville Nights! 8 pm; Diamondback Music Hall, 49345 S. Interstate 94 Service Dr., Belleville;

The Trews with Special Guest Crown Lands 8 pm; Caesars Palace Windsor - Augustus Ballroom, 377 E. Riverside Dr., Windsor;

THE ULTIMATE DOORS - The Doors Tribute Band 7 pm; District 142, 142 Maple St., Wyandotte;

Tribute to PANTERA - Domination Detroit, Blood Rooted - Tribute to Sepultura, Heavy Inc 7:30 pm; The Token Lounge, 28949 Joy Rd., Westland;

DJ/Dance

Saturday Grind 11 am-3 pm; Spkr Box, 200 Grand River, Detroit;

Saturday Grind 11 am-3 pm; Spkr Box, 200 Grand River, Detroit;

Sunday Mar 1

Live/Concert

Charley Crockett 8 pm; Caesars Palace Windsor - Augustus Ballroom, 377 E. Riverside Dr., Windsor;

The Handmaid's Tale 2:30 pm; Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit;

Piss Ant, Backbiter, World Of Malice, Lie In Wait, Chop House 6 pm; Sanctuary Detroit, 2932 Caniff St., Hamtramck;

DJ/Dance

SPKR BRNCH 11 am-3 pm; Spkr Box, 200 Grand River, Detroit;

Karaoke/Open Mic

Sunday Service Karaoke Hosted by Sister DJ Larry 8 pm-1 am; Pronto! Royal Oak, 608 S. Washington, Royal Oak; No Cover.

Sunday Service Karaoke | DJ Larry noon-1 am; Pronto! Royal Oak, 608 S. Washington, Royal Oak; No Cover.

Monday Mar 2

Live/Concert

Sky Covington's Preservation of Jazz Monday Night Music Series, Tributes 7:30-10 pm; Aretha's Jazz Cafe, 350 Madison St., Detroit; $35-$40.

Sky Covington's Preservation of Jazz Monday Night Music Series, Tributes 7:30-10 pm; Aretha's Jazz Cafe, 350 Madison St., Detroit; $35-$40.

A Tribute to Sade ft. Joy Young (Sky Covington's Preservation of Jazz Monday Night Music Series , "Tributes") 7:30-10 pm; Aretha's Jazz Cafe, 350 Madison St., Detroit; $35.

DJ/Dance

Adult Skate Night 8:30-11 pm; Lexus Velodrome, 601 Mack Ave., Detroit; $5.

Tuesday Mar 3

Live/Concert

Sean Blackman's In Transit 7-10 pm; Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore St., Detroit; no cover.

Peter McPoland: Big Lucky Tour 7 pm; The Shelter, 431 E. Congress St., Detroit;

Sean Blackman's In Transit 7-10 pm; Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore St., Detroit; no cover.

DJ/Dance

Cult Member March 3, 7 pm; Pike Room, 1 S. Saginaw, Pontiac;

Karaoke/Open Mic

Open Mic : Art in a Fly Space 7-10 pm; Detroit Shipping Company, 474 Peterboro St., Detroit; no cover.

VIP Tuesday Night Karaoke 9 pm-1 am; Pronto! Royal Oak, 608 S. Washington, Royal Oak; No Cover.

THEATER

Performance

Detroit Repertory Theatre August Wilson's The Piano Lesson August Wilson's THE PIANO LESSON, directed by Janai Lashon. Berneice and her brother Boy Willie fight over the fate of the family piano; she treasures it as a precious connection to their ancestors and he sees it as the means to a more prosperous future. This fourth installment of the American Century Cycle is a haunting play about legacy. $30 advance / $35 same day Fridays, Saturdays, 8-11 pm, Sundays, 2 am-5 pm and Saturdays, 3-6 pm.

Fisher Theatre - Detroit The Simon & Garfunkel Story Saturday Feb. 28, 7:30 pm.

Fox Theatre Blue Man Group - Suite Rental Packages Friday 7:30 pm, Saturday 2 & 7:30 pm and Sunday 1 pm.; Friday 7:30 pm, Saturday 7:30 pm and Sunday 1 pm.

Livonia Community Theatre The White Rose Livonia Community Theatre presents The White Rose by Lillian Garrett-Groag. The play will run for five performances: February 20th, 21st and 27th at 7:30pm and February 22nd and 28th at 2:00pm. On 2/22, join us after the matinee for a talkback. THE STORY: In 1942, a group of Munich students chose to actively protest the atrocities of the Nazi regime in spite of the dangers of capture and execution. They published their thoughts in anonymous leaflets titled "The White Rose." May the actions of these young resistance members represent a beacon of hope against the darkness of totalitarianism. Adult: $20, Senior/Student: $15 Friday 7:30-10:30 pm, Saturday 7:30-10 pm, Sunday 2-4:30 pm, Friday Feb. 27, 7:30-10 pm and Saturday Feb. 28, 2-4:30 pm.

Meadow Brook Theatre What the Constitution Means to Me Wednesday 7:30 pm, Thursday 7:30 pm, Friday 7:30 pm, Saturday 2 & 7:30 pm, Sunday 2 & 6:30 pm, Wednesday 2 & 7:30 pm, Thursday , 7:30 pm, Friday Feb. 27, 7:30 pm, Saturday Feb. 28, 6 pm and Sunday March 1, 2 & 6:30 pm.

The Music Hall PUCCIN'S TURANDOT Saturday Feb. 28, 8 pm.

The Back Office Studio Afterall: A New Play by Cole Hunter Dzubak Starring: Drew Dyer, Jessica Lee, Patrice Linman, Meg McNamee, Sean Sabo, Drew Tallquist, Dean VanLoo, and Mitchell Walker Adam and Raine are gearing up for the next stage of their relationship. All plans are derailed when Adam suffers a family tragedy, causing to revert back to the only coping mechanism that worked as a kid: talking to his imaginary friends. As he navigates his inner turmoil, it's clear that there isn't room for everyone, and is forced to make a choice on who is really there for him; the love of his life or his imaginary friends. General $15, Student $12 Friday Feb. 27, 8-10 pm and Saturday Feb. 28, 8-10 pm.

The Inspired Acting Company HOME by Samm-Art Williams Home follows Cephus Miles, a young man torn from his roots by war,

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TUESDAY FEBRUARY 17
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SEAN BLACKMAN'S IN TRANSIT
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WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 18
DJ DEZ ANDRÉS presents **THE FUNCTION**
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THURSDAY FEBRUARY 19
ELIXIR
JOHN RYAN - GEO
No Cover / 8-12am / 21+

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 20
BOUNCE
DJ COMPLET'D / JOE CHRIS
Advance Tix on Eventbrite / 10pm / 21+

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 21
HOUSE IS HOME
NORM TALLEY - MEDHA ACHAR - DRU ALLAN
Advance Tix on RA / 9pm / 21+

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 24
-LIVE ON STAGE-
SEAN BLACKMAN'S IN TRANSIT
No Cover / 7-10pm / 21+

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 25
DETROIT LOVE JAY
— DILLA WORLD PRE-PARTY —
DJ DEZ - HOUSE SHOES - DJ LOS wsg FAT RAY
Advance Tix on Eventbrite / 10pm / 21+

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 26
ELIXIR
JOHN RYAN - GEO
No Cover / 8-12am / 21+

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 27
WHIRR
Jungle / Juke / Footwork / Ghettotech
DJ'S BONNIE HOOK - SWOOZYDOLPHIN - COFFEE BLACK - BERETTA SHELLS
Tickets on RACO / 9pm / 21+

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 28
ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PRESENTS
FRAMEWORK
RICK WADE - SHIGETO - RYAN SPENCER - TODD MODES
Advance Tix on RA / 9pm / 21+

SATURDAY MARCH 1
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FULLBODYDURAG w/ SPECIAL GUESTS
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Sat 2/21
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Tues 2/24
OPEN MIC IN THE D
HOSTED BY JAH LION
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BRIAN HEINTZ & KIA "PINEAPPLE" HEARN!

Wed 2/25
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, ANTONIO CLARK!

Thurs 2/26
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, NICK JOSEPH!

Fri 2/27
THE DRIVE HOME/FREMONT PIKE/HEADLESS MARY/LIJ
(INDIE/EMO POWER TRIO/POP PUNK)
DOORS@9P/$5COVER
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JAMES CARNEY!

Sat 2/28
5TH ANNUAL BARFLY AWARDS A BLACK TIE(ISH) AFFAIR
HOSTED BY JIMMY DOOM
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Tues 3/03
OPEN MIC IN THE D
HOSTED BY JAH LION
HAPPY 21ST BIRTHDAY, MERLIN PICKENS!

Coming Up:
3/06 Super Horndog/ Static Factory/Burning Time
3/13 Dude/StaggoLee/ The Pool Sharks
3/14 DIVAS vs DIVAS (monthly dance party)
3/21 Velvet Snakes/Ficus/ Sugar Sharp/Simulation
3/22 NAIN ROUGE After Party w DIVAS vs DIVAS
3/25 Olivia and The Lovers/ Bootstrap Boys
3/28 SMILEY's Annual Birthday Extravaganza!
4/03 TIGERS HOME OPENER!
4/03 The Needmores/Violet Daybed/Head Full of Ghosts
4/10 Snapcat Bandits/King of Strings/Into the Next
5/24 THE DETROIT PARTY 2026 (thedetroitparty.com)

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2025 METRO TIMES Best of DETROIT

loss, and hardship. After losing everything he loves—his land, his love, and his freedom—Cephus fights to rebuild his life amid pain and heartbreak. This intimate, powerful drama is brought to life by just three actors—one man and two women who transform seamlessly into more than 40 characters, ranging from teenagers to adults—showcasing a world full of voices and stories that surround Cephus's journey. Filled with lyrical poetry, music, and dance, Home is an emotional exploration of pain, resilience, and the unyielding hope for redemption and belonging. $38; $32 under 30/over 65 Saturdays, Sundays, 2 pm and Fridays, Saturdays, 8 pm.

The War Memorial Open Mic Night Step into the spotlight—or relax in the audience and take it all in. Open Mic Night at The War Memorial invites performers of all kinds to share their talents on stage, from music and poetry to comedy and storytelling. With historic charm, excellent acoustics, and views of Lake St. Clair, the setting is as inspiring as the performances themselves. Whether you're performing or cheering from the crowd, Open Mic Night offers an intimate evening of creativity and connection. A cash bar and light snacks will be available for purchase. Ticket Information General Admission: $5 $5 Friday Feb. 27, 6-10 pm.

Theatre NOVA Kayak by Jordan Hall Theatre NOVA presents: Kayak by Jordan Hall January 30 - February 22, 2026 How high's the water, Mama? Alone on a vast stretch of water, Annie Iversen recounts the chain of events which stranded her in her son's old kayak. A doting suburban mother, Annie is blindsided when her son, Peter, falls in love with Julie, a passionate environmental activist. Desperate to protect her son from what she sees as a reckless path, Annie fights to hold on—until the danger she feared finds her instead. Directed by Briana O'Neal. Shows Fridays at 8:00 pm, Saturdays at 3:00 pm General admission: $30, 65 and over: $25, Students $15 Fridays, Saturdays, 8 pm, Saturdays, 3 pm and Sundays, 2 pm.

Tipping Point Theatre Broke-ology | A play by Nathan Louis Jackson A touching play between a father and his sons as they overcome life's hardships with humor, strength and love. From the late, award-wining playwright Nathan Louis Jackson, BROKE-OLOGY celebrates the strength of familial ties and the enduring power of hope. The New York Theatre Guide says, "We feel the joy, take the blows and ultimately we think of our own families." $47 Wednesdays-Sundays, 7:30-9 pm.

Musical

Fisher Theatre - Detroit The Outsiders (Touring) - Recommended for Ages 10 and Up Tuesday March 3, 7:30 pm.

COMEDY

Improv

Go Comedy! Improv Theater Pandemonia The Allstar Showdown is a highly interactive improvised game show. With suggestions from the audience, our two teams will battle for your laughs. The Showdown is like "Whose Line is it Anyway," featuring a series of short improv games, challenges and more. Fridays and Saturdays 7:30pm & 9:30pm 25.00 Fridays, Saturdays.; $20 Every other Friday, 8 & 10 pm.

Podcast: Live podcast

The Comedy Bar Detroit Scuffed Realtor Live! Nick Rochefort and Alex Schultz are bringing your favorite hub for viewer-submitted house reviews, antique expertise, unsolicited life advice, and breaking expensive shit, LIVE to you this fall. See the guys review local and guest-submitted places and things. They'll let you know exactly how much it's going to cost you in resale value when your Grandma dies and stains her otherwise meticulously white carpets. 35 Sunday 6-8 pm.

Stand-up

Andiamo Celebrity Showroom Todd Oliver Friday 8 pm.

Caesars Palace Windsor - Augustus Ballroom HANNAH BERNER: NONE OF MY BUSINESS TOUR Thursday 8 pm.

The Fillmore Bridget Everett: Big Titties. Big Dreams Saturday 8 pm.; Monday 7 pm.; Monday March 2, 8 pm.

Fox Theatre BERT KREISCHER: PERMISSION TO PARTY Friday Feb. 27, 7 pm and Saturday Feb. 28, 7 pm.

The Music Hall Trey Kennedy-The Relatable Tour Friday 8 pm.

Sound Board Cedric The Entertainer Thursday , 8 pm.; Saturday Feb. 28, 8 pm.

The Comedy Bar Detroit Tim Butterly comes to The Comedy Bar Detroit Britton Emert headlines an evening of laughs at The Comedy Bar, Detroit's newest comedy club experience. Britton Emert is a multi-talented comedian, actor, and content creator who is taking the world of social media and stand-up comedy by storm. Hailing from Hamlet, North Carolina, Britton's unique comedic style blends his experiences as a former police officer, his journey as a single dad to a spirited 3-year-old daughter, and his sharp observations on life's absurdities. Today Britton boasts over 2 million social media followers. Come see him live in an intimate, upscale setting like no other in Detroit! 25 Friday 7-8:30 pm.; Tim Butterly headlines an evening of laughs at The Comedy Bar, Detroit's newest comedy club experience. Tim Butterly is a comedian, writer, podcaster and actor based out of Philadelphia. In addition to co-hosting DadMeat and his solo projects, Field Trippin' and Tim Butterly's Show, he performs stand-up and has acted in numerous commercials, television shows and films. His characters and appearances in Gilly and Keeves, along with his cult-like following from appearances with his friends on Matt and Shane's Secret Podcast, Legion of Skanks, The Bonfire and his all-around good-guy energy, make him a perfect addition to your yearly calendar. 25 Friday Feb. 27, 7-8:30 pm and Saturday Feb. 28, 7-8:30 & 9-10:30 pm.

The Token Lounge MICHAEL WINSLOW with special guest MORGAN PRESTON Thursday 8 pm.

Woodbridge Pub Comedy Night's Black History Month Celebration - Featuring Ryan Brown Our annual Black History Month Celebration features Detroit's own Ryan Brown, hosted by the hilarious and hard-working Aqua Tofana. Aqua lights up stages all over the region and across the border. Featured comedian Ryan Brown's quick wit and playful curiosity make every show feel like a completely different experience. He's headlined at clubs across the Midwest including Mark Ridley's, Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase, and is the creator of "Scumbaggery" - a live panel show at The Independent Comedy Club. He's also featured at festivals such as the Motor City Comedy Festival and Traverse City Comedy Fest. Free. Come, laugh. Free Tuesday 9:30-11:30 pm.

Blind Pig Blind Pig Comedy FREE Mondays, 8 pm.

The Independent Comedy Club at Planet Ant The Sh*t Show Open Mic: Every Friday & Saturday at The Independent A weekly open mic featuring both local amateurs and touring professionals. Doors open at 8:30 p.m. and the show begins at 9 pm.. The evening always ends with karaoke in the attached Ghost Light Bar! Doors and Sign up 8:30 p.m. Show at 9 p.m. $5 suggested donation. Attached bar Ghost Light opens at 7 p.m. $5 Suggested Donation Thursdays, 9-10:30 pm.; A late night, heckle encouraged, show up, go up stand-up open mic featuring both local amateurs and touring professionals. Sign up starts at 10:30 and the show begins at 11p. Doors and Sign Up 10:30p | Show at 11p | $5 Suggested Donation* Attached bar Ghost Light opens at 7p The independent Comedy Club is a comedy club run by comics for comics inside Planet Ant Theatre. The club runs Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, offering independently produced comedy shows from 8p-12a. Presented by Planet Ant *Planet Ant Theatre, Inc. is a 501c3 nonprofit organization; no ticket or reservation is required $5 Suggested Donation Fridays, Saturdays, 11 pm-1:30 am.

Salt + Ko Tony Roney's Hilarious Sunday Night Comedy, Every Sunday @ Salt + Ko Inside The Radisson Hotel 26555 Telegraph Rd Southfield, MI. Tony Roney's Hilarious Friday & Saturday Night Comedy, Inside Starters Bar & Grill, 18426 Plymouth Rd Detroit MI. Show Time 8pm. Tickets $25.00 . This comedy show will showcase Detroit's funniest up and coming comedians. Sponsored by Tony Roney's Comic Vibe. For more info contact Kamilah @ 313 729 0502 or 248 906 6119. 25.00 Fridays, 8-10 pm and Saturdays, 8-10 pm.; Tony Roney's Comic Vibe Presents "Tony Roney's Hilarious Sunday Night Comedy, Every Sunday @ Salt + Ko Inside The Radisson Hotel 26555 Telegraph Rd Southfield, MI. Show Time 8pm. Tickets $25.00 . This comedy show will showcase Detroit's funniest up and coming comedians. Sponsored by Tony Roney's Comic Vibe. For more info contact Kamilah @ 313 729 0502 or 248 906 6119. #highlightseveryonefollowers, #thingstodothisweekend, #thingstodoonsaturday, #thingstodoindetroit, #THEKRACKJOKERS, #tonyroneyscomicvibe, #TKJ, #easternmarket, #easternmarketdetroit, #UnitedStatesEvents, #michiganevents, #detroitcomedy, #michiganevents, #detroitperformances, #afterchristmas, #afterchristmascomedy, #newyearcomedy, #DetroitNightLife, #openmiccomedy, #eventbrite, #eventbritetickets, #comedy2026, #comedyindetroit, #newyear2026, #newyearcomedy, #RadissonHotels, #kamilah, #thingstodoonsunday 25 Sundays, 12-7:30 pm.; Tony Roney's Hilarious Sunday Night Comedy, Every Sunday @ Salt + Ko Inside The Radisson Hotel 26555 Telegraph Rd Southfield, MI. Show Time 6pm & 8pm. Tickets $25.00 . This comedy show will showcase Detroit's funniest up and coming comedians. Sponsored by Tony Roney's Comic Vibe. For more info contact Kamilah @ 313 729 0502 or 248 906 6119. #highlightseveryonefollowers, #thingstodothisweekend, #thingstodoonsaturday, #thingstodoindetroit, #THEKRACKJOKERS, #tonyroneyscomicvibe, #TKJ, #easternmarket, #easternmarketdetroit, #UnitedStatesEvents, #michiganevents, #detroitcomedy, #michiganevents, #detroitperformances, #afterchristmas, #afterchristmascomedy, #newyearcomedy, #DetroitNightLife, #openmiccomedy, #eventbrite, #eventbritetickets, #comedy2026, #toneyroneyshilarioussundaynightcomedy, #comedyindetroit, #newyear2026, #newyearcomedy, #RadissonHotels, #kamilah, #thingstodoonsunday, https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1979459688213?aff=oddtdtcreator https://patch.com/michigan/detroit/calendar/event/20260111/1e3aa078-38cb-4db6-a8b3-1e977ffad43f/tony-roneys-hilarious-sunday-night-comedy https://community.metrotimes.com/event/tony-roneys-hilarious-sunday-night-comedy-every-sunday-salt-ko-inside-the-radisson-hotel-26555-telegraph-rd-southfield-mi-41008277 25.00 Sundays, 6-7:30 pm.

Starter's Bar and Grill Hilarious Friday & Saturday Night Comedy – Starring Tony Roney & The Krack Jokers Tony Roney's Hilarious Friday & Saturday Night Comedy, Inside Starters Bar & Grill, 18426 Plymouth Rd Detroit MI. Show Time 8pm. Tickets $25.00. This comedy show will showcase Detroit's funniest up and coming comedians. Sponsored by Tony Roney's Comic Vibe. For more info contact Kamilah @ 313 729 0502 or 248 906 6119. #highlightseveryonefollowers, #thingstodothisweekend, #thingstodoonsaturday, #thingstodoindetroit, #THEKRACKJOKERS, #tonyroneyscomicvibe, #TKJ, #easternmarket, #easternmarketdetroit, #UnitedStatesEvents, #michiganevents, #detroitcomedy, #michiganevents, #detroitperformances, #afterchristmas, #afterchristmascomedy, #newyearcomedy, #DetroitNightLife, #openmiccomedy, #eventbrite, #eventbritetickets, #comedy2026, #toneyroneyshilarioussundaynightcomedy, #comedyindetroit, #newyear2026, #newyearcomedy, #RadissonHotels, #kamilah, #thingstodoonsunday, #Starter's Bar and Grill https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1979459688213?aff=oddtdtcreator https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1981329840890?aff=oddtdtcreator https://patch.com/michigan/detroit/calendar/event/20260111/1e3aa078-38cb-4db6-a8b3-1e977ffad43f/tony-roneys-hilarious-sunday-night-comedy https://community.metrotimes.com/event/tony-roneys-hilarious-sunday-night-comedy-every-sunday-salt-ko-inside-the-radisson-hotel-26555-telegraph-rd-southfield-mi-41008277 25.00 Fridays, 8-10 pm.

DANCE

Dance performance

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- Detroit Dance Collective Collage Concert is Detroit Dance Collective's annual contemporary dance performance celebrating collaboration, community, and the power of movement to connect. Now in its 46th season, DDC—Detroit's longest-running professional modern dance company—presents repertory and in-progress works alongside guest artist Shanzell Page and regional youth performers. Designed as a layered "collage" of voices and styles, the concert explores themes of humanity, resilience, and shared joy, inviting audiences to gather and experience the impact of live dance together. General: $25; Student: $15 Saturday Feb. 28, 7:30 pm and Sunday March 1, 2:30 pm.

The Music Hall Grand Kyiv Ballet Giselle Sunday March 1, 5 pm.

Dance lessons

Wayne State University - Maggie Allesee Department of Dance Ailey Experience Detroit The Ailey Experience Tour provides dancers of all experience levels the opportunity to study with prominent Ailey instructors and former Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater company dancers in their hometown. Students learn a variety of techniques while learning the rich history of Alvin Ailey's signature style and how he changed the perception of American modern dance. No dance experience or audition is required—all levels are welcome! Ailey Experience tour students ages 11–21 who participate in both days will have the chance to win a scholarship to attend Ailey Experience NYC this summer at AILEY for free. $40-$120 Saturday 10 am-4 pm and Sunday 10 am-4 pm.

FILM

Screening

Emagine Novi Winter Kids Series At Select Emagine Theaters Don't miss our Winter Kids Series at select locations! Join us for a different movie each week Jan 9 – Feb 27, 2025. Tickets are $3 for all ages. Magic Packs available for $5. Dates and showtimes are subject to change. Limited availability each week. Not eligible for group rentals. If tickets are not currently on sale at your preferred Emagine location, please check back later. www.Emagine-Entertainment.com Through Feb. 27, 10 am-10 pm.

Senate Theater Blade (1998) Doors – 7:00 PM Organ Overture – 7:30 PM Film – 8:00 PM - 1r 56min | R | Crime/Drama | A hitman with a warrior code. A samurai with guns. A movie with a vibe. Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai, starring Forrest Whitaker, is a strange and beguiling film. It follows Ghost Dog, a contract killer in 1990s New Jersey, whose belief in the samurai warrior code keeps him committed to his mafia masters. When a job goes wrong, an old Japanese text, homing pigeons, and an ice cream vendor can save him from internal/external desperation. $6.00 Friday Feb. 27, 8-10:30 pm.; Doors – 7:00 PM Organ Overture – 7:30 PM Film – 8:00 PM - 2hr omin | R | Action/Horror | Directed by special effects master Stephen Norrington and starring the eternally cool Wesley Snipes, Blade is a dark horror take on the superhero genre. It follows Eric Brooks (alias Blade), a half-man, half-vampire "daywalker" with a mission to destroy the creatures responsible for his condition and the death of his mother. With the help of a father-figure with munitions expertise, Blade wages war on vampires. But can our hero keep this ancient power at bay when humanity is threatened? $6.00 Saturday Feb. 28, 8-10:30 pm.

Six Spoke Brewing Company Six Spoke Film Club: DOUBLE FEATCH - Blood Car / Collision Course We're piping up a dual exhaust this time with TWO flicks! COLLISION COURSE: Famous car junkie, Jay Leno, plays Detective Tony Costas, a Detroit police officer who reluctantly teams up with Pat Morita's Inspector Natsuo in order to recover a stolen Japanese turbocharger prototype. BLOOD CAR: Are gas prices killing you? Fight back! What starts as an eco-friendly dream spirals into a bloody, absurd nightmare when a young school teacher builds an engine with a lust for blood. Rev your engines on Tuesday, February 24, for BLOOD CAR and COLLISION COURSE, a Motor City murder combo! FREE Tuesday 6-9 pm.

Film festival

The Riviera Cinema Black History Month: $5 Film Series at Select Michigan Emagine Theaters Emagine Entertainment invites you to visit select Emagine locations to Celebrate Black History Month. Throughout the month of February, Emagine will be showing a variety of African American influenced films for only $5. These films showcase some of the most influential black entertainers in modern history. Locations: Emagine Canton, Emagine Royal Oak, Riviera Powered By Emagine Film Schedule: Showtimes will vary by location DO THE RIGHT THING – February 5 JUST MERCY – February 12 AMERICAN GANGSTER – February 19 MALCOLM X – February 26 Theaters, dates, and showtimes are subject to change. Thursday 11 am-11 pm and Thursday , 11 am-11 pm.

Artist talk

Artistic Anatomy 1 Yr. Certificate Program Artistic Anatomy , one year certificate course, is certified by the National Artistic Anatomy Society, and begins September 4, 2025. The location is Moose Tree Studio, 3191 W Clarkston Rd., Lake Orion, MI 48362. The class takes place every Thursday, 6pm - 8:30pm. The course includes step-by-step drawing demonstrations of the human skeleton and muscle structures, plus, each student will create a 15" standing figure sculpture of the skeleton and muscles. Instructors - Eugene Clark and Diane Heath. Attend in-person each week, or, enjoy the Live-stream. Tuition is $250.00 per month. www.heathart.com Thursdays, 6-8:30 pm; Moose Tree Studio, 3191 W Clarkston Rd, Lake Orion; $250.00; 3136589181; www.heathart.com/.

Vanessa german: CREATIVE CONSCIOUSNESS & SPIRITUAL PRACTICE Penny Stamps Speaker Series. Open to the public. Free of charge. vanessa german is a leading citizen artist working in sculpture, performance, and communal ritual to cultivate spiritual models for transforming human experience. Establishing her own self-taught approach and distinctive artistic language, german's influential practice employs mineral crystals, beads, glass, found objects, and other sourced material to create expressive figurative sculptures that resound through the physical and metaphysical worlds. Her unique sculptural vocabulary transmits healing energy, affirming the power of love as an infinite human technology by exploring the evolution of creative power and practice as citizen artist. Thursday 5:30-7 pm; Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor; Free; 734-668-8480; stamps.umich.edu/events/venessa-german.

Performance art

86 Plastic Co Candle-Making Workshop Join us for a relaxed candle-making workshop where beautiful scents, hands-on creation, and a warm, welcoming atmosphere come together. Laugh, connect, and enjoy the process — no experience needed. 60 Sunday 3-5 pm.

The Vinyl Society Vibes & Verses Spoken Word Poetry Night What to Expect: An inspiring space for poets and artists to shine Electrifying music sets that set the perfect backdrop A lively open mic segment encouraging community participation Spotlight features from top local talent Produced by B Cyde Broadcasting Network (www.thebcyde.online), Vibes & Verses aims to foster a safe, welcoming environment where creativity flows freely and voices are amplified. Whether you're a poetry enthusiast, a casual listener, or an aspiring artist, this night is designed for everyone eager to experience the power of spoken word. Join us every Wednesday evening at Vinyl Society and be part of Detroit's thriving arts Free Wednesdays, 7-10 pm.

Art Exhibition

Detroit Shipping Company BUTTERFLY BONES: Ceramic Sculptures by Genevieve VanZandt Butterfly Bones invites viewers to explore the intersection of fragility and resilience, whimsy and the quietly profound. The exhibition's title alludes to paradoxes that unfold throughout VanZandt's process and imagery: delicate insect forms and skeletal echoes, beauty and decay, impermanence and endurance. Using a mix of hand-built and slip-cast techniques, she collects, organizes, and archives individual components, which are later assembled like visual fragments in a collage. Raw clay and fired pieces are layered, fired, and glazed repeatedly, resulting in richly textured, kaleidoscopic ceramic sculptures that serve as three-dimensional collages imbued with visual metaphors of transformation. FREE Thursday 5-8 pm.

Ann Arbor District Library The Art of Zingerman's: a Feast for Your Eyes – Second Course Warning: This exhibit may increase your need for a nosh. Zingerman's aesthetic is instantly recognizable and well-known here in Ann Arbor and across the country. The illustrators' work through the years, hand-done in pencil, ink, and paint, capture the spirit of fun, food, and community that is Zingerman's. From zany characters like Grandpa Pickle and Bacon Detective to artful still-lifes of artisan olive oil bottles and packages of coffee beans, they have created more than 10,000 images—packed like a Zingerman's gift box with beauty, whimsy, and the unexpected. Experience their delicious details and colors up close and in person... but please do not lick the art. No cover Through Feb. 27.

Anton Art Center Michigan Annual LIII Opening January 24th, Heartwork is a juried exhibit of over forty original artworks by members of five local artist groups: the Lakeside Palette Club of St. Clair Shores, Mount Clemens Art Association, Romeo Guild of Art, Shelby Township Fine Art Society, and Warren Tri-County Fine Arts, Inc. The Heartwork competition will be juried by Darcel Deneau, a 2021 Kresge Arts in Detroit Fellow and a graduate of the College for Creative Studies. Free Tuesdays-Saturdays, 10 am-5 pm.; January 31st through February 28, the Center's first floor gallery will host the 53rd annual statewide fine art competition and exhibition, Michigan Annual II, juried by Grace Serra. Serra is the Art Collection Curator at Wayne State University and serves as the Exhibition Curator at the University of Michigan's North Campus Research Complex. With 30+ years in Public Arts, she has coordinated many major art installations in the Detroit People Mover, Detroit Receiving Hospital, and Children's Hospital. Free Tuesdays-Saturdays, 10 am-5 pm.

Cranbrook Art Museum Constellations & Affinities: Selections from the Cranbrook Collection "Constellations and Affinities: Selections from the Cranbrook Collection" is now open at Cranbrook Art Museum! Sampling from the Cranbrook Collection, this ongoing exhibition gathers a broad and eclectic sampling of objects made by artists, architects, and designers associated with Cranbrook Academy of Art. Arranged like a contemporary curiosity cabinet, the works on view span numerous media and represent a broad range of practices taught at the Academy. Works have been arranged in various constellations to compare and contrast certain affinities in materials, processes, and approaches among the artists while acknowledging the singular artistic vision of each maker. Museum Admission, Free on Thursdays Wednesdays-Sundays, 11 am-5 pm.

Detroit Artists Market Detroit Artists Market: "Process + Perception" Process + Perception, Curated by AndyT, is a group exhibition of 2D & 3D process-driven artworks that are created through the layering of materials and actions as well as through the layering of imagery. The resulting works create a variety of visual phenomena for the viewer that range from quiet & contemplative to intense & overwhelming. Tuesdays-Saturdays, 11 am-6 pm.

Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA) Thursdays at the Museum: Highlights of the Permanent Collection Free Tuesdays-Sundays, 1 pm, Fridays, 6 pm and Saturdays, Sundays, 3 pm.; Free Thursdays, 1 pm.

EmmaJean Woodyard Gallery at the Henry Ford Centennial Library Pathways Photography Exhibit Please join us for our next "Pathways" photography exhibition! "Pathways" is a group of four emerging photographic artists: Joel Geffen, Tim Haber, Pollyanne McKillop, and Pamela Sayre. "Pathways," short for "Pathways to the Self," is also a philosophy. We believe that photography, ultimately, is self-portraiture. Pathways is founded on the proposition that if we can

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WHAT'S GOING ON CONT'D

determine why we photograph what we do and why we care about certain subjects, we can better create compelling art. Please enjoy our "Pathways" exhibition: Jan 15 - Feb 27, 2026 EmmaJean Woodyard Gallery at the Henry Ford Centennial Library 16301 Michigan Ave, Dearborn, MI 0 Through Feb. 27, 6-8 pm.

Irwin House Gallery Khary Mason's FRIENDLY FIRE: A photo essay on 30 years in Detroit law enforcement FRIENDLY FIRE is a photo essay by multidisciplinary artist, storyteller, and former Detroit Police Homicide Detective, Khary Mason. In this photographic series, the viewer witnesses the path of the artist, Khary Mason, immersed in a world of service, beginning with the naive, unfiltered perspective of a child and dissecting his experiences on both sides of the badge. Through these scenic and deeply personal reimaginations, Mason examines the history, state, and future of law enforcement in these United States of America. Opening Reception: Sunday, January 25th. Artist Talk: February 1st. Exhibition is open Thurs-Sun thru March 15, 2026. FREE TO ATTEND Thursdays-Saturdays, 12-7 pm and Sundays, 12-5 pm.

Northville Art House Collective Inspirations The Chelsea Painters invite viewers to experience a collection of work shaped by shared curiosity, expressive freedom, and the subtle transformations that unfold when artists grow together. Each work in this exhibition reflects a distinct creative voice—yet together, these pieces form a harmonious tapestry of color, gesture, and imagination. Across diverse media and subjects, the artists draw strength from one another, finding inspiration in both their differences and their common dedication to pursuing excellence in their painting careers. The result is a vibrant celebration of community, creativity, and the joy that emerges when individual visions converge. Free Tuesdays-Saturdays.

Oakland County International Airport Aviation Impressionism, Acrylic on Canvas "Fly high , take chances " A collection of impressionist Aviation works by local Greg Upshur. Runs through May..Free In the lobby at Oakland County International Mon thru Fri 9 to 5 free Mondays-Fridays.

PICK**Russell Industrial Complex-Exhibition Center** Dirty Show 26 Dirty Show returns for its 26th year, inviting you into a world where passion, creativity, and provocation intertwine. Wander through a collection of over 300 artworks—photographed, painted, illustrated, sculpted, and filmed—each exploring the many forms of erotic expression. Then lose yourself in the pulse of live performance: smoldering Burlesque, daring Boylesque, exquisite Drag, and irresistible acts that thrill and tease. Starting at $50 advance, $60 day of show Friday 7 pm-2 am and Saturday 7 pm-2 am.

University of Michigan Museum of Art Unsettling Histories: Legacies of Slavery and Colonialism Trace the fascinating and sometimes. troubling stories behind the world's most desired ceramics. The technology and taste for blue and white porcelain originated in China in the fourteenth century, and quickly set off a worldwide craze that lasted five hundred years. Installed across four different galleries at UMMA, this exhibition explores that history and tracks the influence of blue and white ceramics across the globe. free Tuesdays-Sundays.; Following years of research into the Museum's and University of Michigan's relationships with Africa and African art collections, We Write To You About Africa is a complete reinstallation and doubling of the Museum's space dedicated to African art. free Tuesdays-Sundays.; This exhibition proactively engages with debates about restitution and the ethics of museums' owning African heirlooms collected during the era of colonization. The investigation and research into 11 works of African art will be conducted publicly — visitors will have access to documents, photographs, and correspondence that will help UMMA develop a better understanding of each object's history, grappling in real time with questions surrounding legal and ethical ownership of these artworks. Though complex, this project presents exciting opportunities for museum transparency and creating new pathways for relationship-building with partners in Africa and its diaspora. free Tuesdays-Sundays.; "Unsettling Histories" rejects the simple narratives of our collection's past and forces us to examine whose history we prioritize and why. Organized as a response to the Museum's recent acquisition of Titus Kaphar's "Flay (James Madison)," this reinstallation of one of our most prominent gallery spaces forces us to grapple with our collection of European and American art, 1650-1850. free Tuesdays-Sundays.

WELLNESS

Self-care

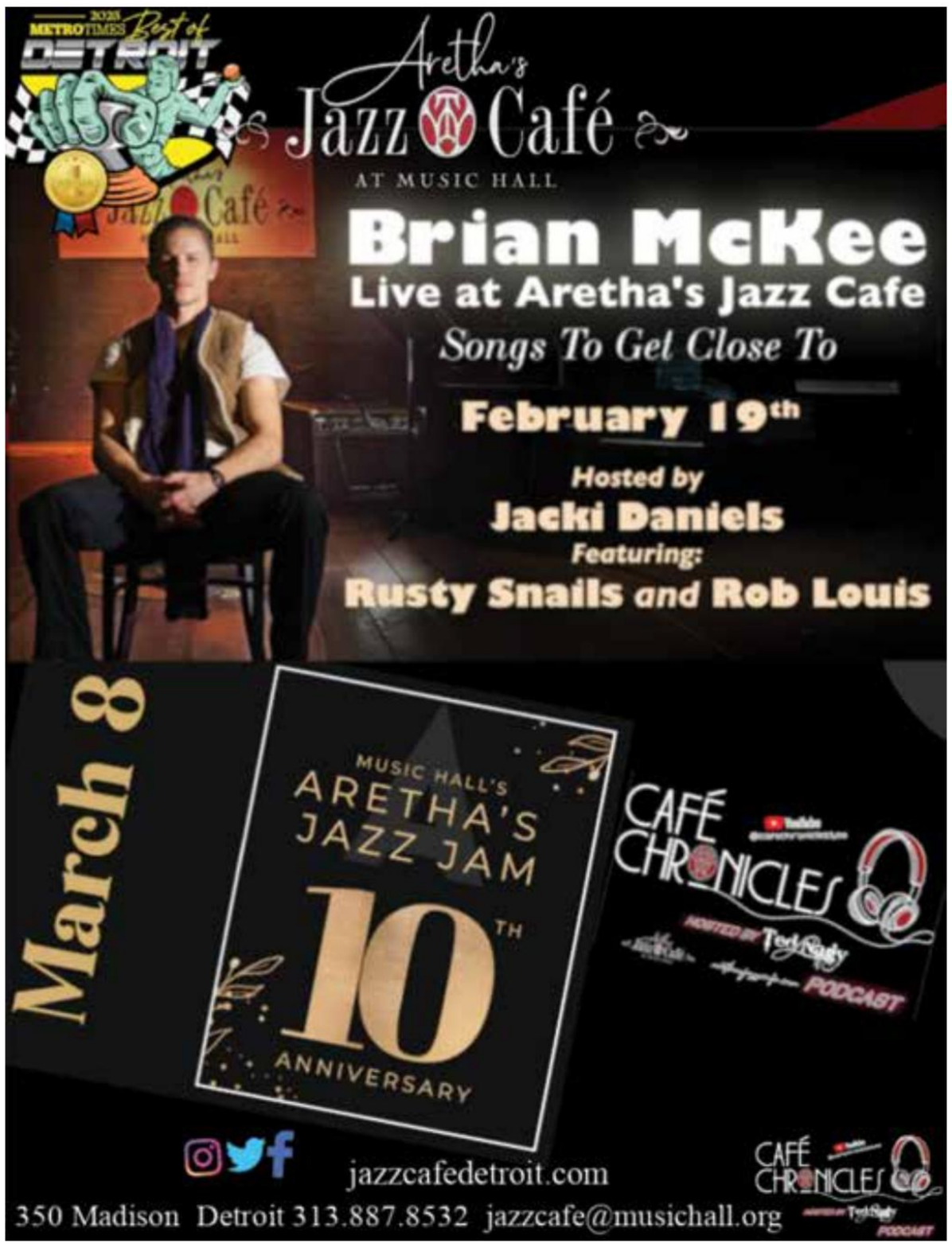
Art Of Living Part-1 Program w Gurudevs session What is the Art of Living Part 1 course? Impact of SKY® on Health and Wellbeing Science-backed benefits of SKY®, taught in the Art of Living Part 1, shown in over 100 independent studies Key Highlights of the 3 Day Part 1 Course "Meditation is the journey from sound to silence, from movement to stillness, from a limited identity to unlimited space." ~ Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar "Life Changing" "May be the fastest growing spiritual practice on the planet" "Shows promise in providing relief for depression" "Like Fresh air to millions" 21st of every month, 6-9:03 pm; Art Of Living Happiness Center, 44815 Cherry Hill Rd, Canton; 7047050425.

Beginners fitness bootcamp Beginner friendly fast paced bootcamp fitness class with great trainers that keeps the class fun and simple. Mondays, 7:30-8:30 am & 5:30-6:30 pm; Kratos Fit Gym, 9379 Telegraph, Redford; Free; 3138707580; kratosfpg.fit.

The Life of Dr. Bertha Van Hoosen Step inside the extraordinary life of Dr. Bertha Van Hoosen, a trailblazing surgeon who reshaped the future of women in medicine. Born in 1863 and raised on her family's farm in what is now Rochester Hills, Dr. Van Hoosen fought her way into the medical field at a time when women were denied even the most basic opportunities. Over her 59-year career, she broke barriers, pioneered surgical techniques, founded the American Medical Women's Association, and mentored generations of young women she endearingly called her "surgical daughters." Join us for this deeply human look at her journey as part of the Sunday 1-2 pm; Packard Proving Grounds Historic Site, 49965 Van Dyke, Shelby charter Township; Free; 586-739-4800; eventvesta.com/events/129129/t/tickets.

Magnified Healing® Phase 1 Certification Workshop Magnified Healing® Phase 1 Certification Workshop. You are lovingly invited to join us for a sacred two-day journey into Magnified Healing® Phase 1 Certification Workshop, a powerful yet gentle energy healing modality that supports healing on the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual levels. This class is open to all—no prior experience required. Participants will receive international certification and authorization to practice and teach Magnified Healing® Phase 1 in accordance with Magnified Healing® guidelines. <0x1F4C5> February 21 & 22, 2026 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM <0x1F4CD> CenterPeace Healing Center – Farmington <0x1F33F> Facilitators: Josi Toboy & Joseane Blackmon Saturday 10 am-6 pm and Sunday 10 am-6 pm; CenterPeace Healing and Events Center, 33750 Freedom Road, Farmington; 540; 7344744953.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Course Give yourself a gift this new year. Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Course Learning about the stress response and how the brain/body react to stress can open the door to new ways of healing, coping and managing stress. <0x1F98B> You will learn evidence based mindfulness / meditation practices and gentle yoga. <0x1F98B> All are welcome. No prior meditation experience is necessary. Please check detailed schedule in the flyer. MT



BITES

Apotheculture Club taps Gladys Nite for cannabis cuisine event

Getting high and watching a theatrical performance of dystopian *The Handmaid's Tale* sounds like it could be a bit frightening, but you'd be in good hands at this upcoming Detroit event.

The Apotheculture Club is partnering with chefs from Detroit's popular Gladys Nite food pop-up as part of its series pairing cannabis with live theater.

Chefs Jessica Kindle and Kayleigh Waterman of Gladys Nite will cook up a THC-infused meal ahead of a group outing to see the final performance of the run of *The Handmaid's Tale* at the Detroit Opera House, an operatic adaptation of the popular book and TV show. The event is set for Saturday, March 7.

According to the Apotheculture Club, the THC levels in each dish are tailored to each member's individual tolerance. The dinner is held at a private residence, and attendees are then transported to the Detroit Opera House and back for "late night snacks."

Given the dark subject matter of the show, the Gladys Nite chefs say they are trying to keep the menu fun.

"The story of *The Handmaid's Tale* is one of tragedy and deep emotional connection, so before sending Apotheculture Club members off to the opera we would like to highlight the joy of the diversity of the world that we live in now," the chefs said in a statement. "Our menu is inspired by the 'Little America' of the television show, where the diversity of American and Canadian culture combine. We will be using fresh local seasonal produce and a variety of cooking styles to bring flavors from some of the many cultures that make up the America we know today."

If this sounds like a good time, you can get tickets at posh.vip for $125 per person, with additional benefits offered to those who have been previously incarcerated for cannabis-related offenses.

"We talk openly about cannabis progress at our events, and our conversations have inspired some members to sponsor seats at the dinner table for system-impacted folks," says Apotheculture Club founder James Blaszko. "We want to help reduce the stigma on recreational consumption, and hope to inspire a shift in national cannabis policy."

The event starts at 4:30 p.m. at the private residence with dinner at 5 p.m. and a return to the residence expected for 10:45 p.m.

The Apotheculture Club launched in 2023 in Detroit and has held events across the U.S. More information is also available on Instagram @apothecultureclub.

Gladys Nite is known for its popular residencies in Detroit nightclubs Spot Lite and UFO Bar in recent years. It is on Instagram @gladysnitedetroit.

—Lee DeVito

Kuzzo's Chicken & Waffles. SCOTT SPELLMAN

Kuzzo's Chicken & Waffles closes

A popular soul food restaurant in Detroit is closing its doors for good.

In a social media post published last week, Kuzzo's Chicken & Waffles thanked its customers but suggested it will continue to exist in another form.

"After 11 incredible years of serving the Detroit community, we're closing this chapter of Kuzzo's Chicken and Waffles with full hearts," the post reads. "While it's bittersweet, we're excited to move our family and brand toward new ventures and new possibilities. None of this would've been possible without the love, loyalty, and support you've shown us over the years."

It continued, "Thank you, Detroit, for believing in us, rocking with us, and making this journey unforgettable. This isn't goodbye, it's see you soon."

It ended with, "Stay tuned for what's next 🤍🐔🧇"

The restaurant launched in 2015 by former Detroit Lions cornerback Ron Bartell at 19345 Livernois Ave. on the Avenue of Fashion. It closed in 2019 for renovations, and had the misfortune of reopening in 2020 just as the COVID-19 pandemic caused lawmakers to order restaurants to pivot to carry-out. Kuzzo's reopened again in 2023following additional renovations and a retooled menu.

It was known for its fried chicken and waffle combo, and also served up other Southern-style soul food favorites and brightly-colored drinks served in mason jars.

—Lee DeVito

Parks Old Style Bar-B-Que calls it quits

After doing business in Detroit's North End neighborhood for more than six decades, Parks Old Style Bar-B-Que has closed its doors for good.

The small carryout spot whose ribs became famous in the region announced via a handwritten note on its door that its final day of business would be Sunday, Feb. 8, according to the *Michigan Chronicle* and other outlets. In its final days it accepted walk-in orders only.

Located at 7444 Beaubien St., Parks first opened in 1964 by Edward Parks, who passed the business onto his son Roderick Parks Sr., who then passed it onto his son Rod Parks Jr.

In 2014, *Metro Times* reported that Parks was selling between 2,500 to 3,000 pounds of ribs a week, drawing diners from the suburbs with its ribs and chicken slathered in house-made sauces, including a vinegar-based Southern style.

Even as the city depopulated, Parks held on strong, and Roderick Parks Sr. was optimistic in a rebound.

"Oh, the neighborhood has changed tremendously," he told *Metro Times* in 2014. "When we came here, you didn't have all those vacant lots or dilapidated housing. The area is in transition. They're building a lot of townhouses down south of us, there's some north of us. Eventually there will be some housing improvement in Highland Park, Hamtramck. So I'm confident that the North End will survive and will prosper."

According to *Crain's Detroit Business*, Roderick Parks Jr. said that foot traffic had declined in recent times and his father is facing health issues.

—Lee DeVito

Michigan by the Bottle opens new local wine tasting room

Michigan is home to one of the biggest wine industries in the U.S., with nearly 200 wineries that produce more than 4 million gallons each year.

These are the focus of Michigan by the Bottle, a local chain of tasting rooms. Its newest location opened at 146 S. Broadway St., Lake Orion.

The tasting rooms offer rotating selections from 15 Michigan wineries, hosting regular tastings, events, educational classes, and other programming.

"Michigan by the Bottle exists to celebrate and support Michigan wine by bringing wineries together under one roof," co-owner Taylor Simpson said in a statement. "Our goal has always been to create welcoming spaces where guests can connect with the stories behind the wines and experience Michigan's wine community in an approachable way."

The Lake Orion location joins others in Royal Oak, Auburn Hills, and Shelby Township.

—Lee DeVito MT

2025 METRO TIMES Best of DETROIT

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FIEGERLAW

No biopic of "The Bard," this film defies categorization. FOCUS FEATURES

Film

Shakespeare's greatest tragedy

By Jared Rasic, Last Word Features

Hamnet

Rated: PG-13
Run-time: 126 minutes

"Of all the wonders that I yet have heard, it seems to me most strange that men should fear; seeing that death, a necessary end, will come when it will come." —Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*

Hamnet opens on Agnes (played by a primally explosive Jessie Buckley) waking at the foot of a massive tree in the depths of an old-growth forest. She (as was her mother before her) is treated as a woods witch, a blend of mysterious naturopath and rugged outdoorswoman, more comfortable as a quiet falconer than engaging in society. She meets William Shakespeare (a quietly devastating Paul Mescal), a below average Latin tutor, and they immediately, wildly, fall in love.

Agnes has visions of the future, one of which is that, by the time she is on her deathbed, she has two children. After giving birth to Susanna and then, years later, the twins Hamnet and Judith, she knows that having three children means tragedy will befall her family. What could have played as an overwrought historical drama focused on Agnes and William Shakespeare and their shared grief is instead a magically realist tone poem bolstered by two towering performances by Buckley and Mescal, served by tender and ethereal filmmaking by Chloé Zhao.

As someone who has read nearly every word penned by Shakespeare while still knowing next to nothing about the man, I found *Hamnet* to be a fascinating peek at the spirit of this legendary figure. While Agnes and her unrelenting bravery and bottomless wells of empathy are the soul of the film, Mescal's Shakespeare is the quiet heart, beating only for his art and family. Even though Mescal imbues "The Bard" with a lived-in immediacy, he's still somewhat a mystery existing on the fringes of his family's life — off in London building a career as a celebrated playwright while his family lives free, running across the fields and forests of the countryside.

I haven't read the novel *Hamnet* by Maggie O'Farrell (who also co-wrote the screenplay with Zhao), but now I can't wait to check it out. I would love to luxuriate in this world longer and explore in more depth the nuances of these characters that I'm sure only abstractly resemble their real-life counterparts. While on the surface, *Hamnet* is ostensibly a look at what motivated Shakespeare to write *Hamlet*, it works best as an examination of grief and how two very different people approach healing. I'm curious whether the book leans into the emotional or historical aspects more.

It's not really a spoiler to say that Hamnet dies of the plague, which absolutely shatters Agnes and pushes her into an almost feral mania, while it causes Shakespeare to retreat into his writing, penning *Hamlet* as a form of therapy. *Hamlet* as a play doesn't initially seem like it would have any real relation to the sweet young boy (played by the preternaturally gifted Jacobi Jupe) who tragically dies before experiencing much of the life ahead of him. O'Farrell makes the connections beautifully with her script, but Zhao does something much more elemental by crafting a tone and mood that feels equal parts emotionally honest and magically surrealist. *Hamnet* as a film has no truck in literalism; instead it would rather craft a sense of supernatural mysticism born from the ancient forests of the United Kingdom.

I wasn't as emotionally shattered as I expected to be, but that might say more about me being dead inside than it does about the film not being resonant as a dramatic and heartbreaking work. What elevates *Hamnet* into something truly remarkable isn't the script as much as it is the elegiac filmmaking from Zhao and the monumental performances of Mescal and Buckley. Their chemistry is animalistic and deliciously sexy, while their shared suffering never becomes histrionic like it easily could have been. Mescal has been a movie star for a minute, but Buckley has mostly been a brilliant character actor. Now she's a full-blown force of nature. *Hamnet* should be the first of many Oscar nominations for her.

Regardless of your feelings for the work of Shakespeare or Elizabethan drama, *Hamnet* almost defies categorization as a cinematic work. Equal parts powerfully dramatic and mercurially mystical, Zhao proves once again why she is an artist in rarified air as she crafts a film of such hypnotic force as to feel not just like an instant classic, but as a work that could be as timelessly eternal as Shakespeare's best. Just don't go into it expecting a biopic of Shakespeare. Instead, this is about the brilliant and enigmatic Agnes Shakespeare and her almost-as-interesting husband, William.

Grade: A MT

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Though a number of states have legalized cannabis for adult and medical use, it remains illegal at the federal level. SHUTTERSTOCK

Opinion

Rescheduling of cannabis is critical to industry stability and growth while providing necessary tax relief

By Brian Farah

The proposed rescheduling of cannabis currently under consideration by the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Justice and the Drug Enforcement Agency would move it from Schedule I to Schedule III under the federal Controlled Substances Act (CSA) with a final rule is expected potentially by mid-to-late 2026.

This change is important because it formally acknowledges that cannabis has an accepted medical use and a lower potential for abuse than Schedule I substances, which could have significant impacts on taxation, research, and medical access.

Currently, under federal law, marijuana is a Schedule I controlled substance, meaning it is considered to have no currently accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse, alongside drugs like heroin and LSD.

The federal government has taken action that demonstrates that it actually doesn't believe cannabis is a Schedule I substance because it has encouraged state legal medicinal markets. Additionally, most states have passed legislation and have approved commerce that has generated tens of billions of dollars while also passing repeated legislation prohibiting prosecution of cannabis crimes.

The Department of Health and Human Service recommended moving it to Schedule III, a category for substances with a moderate-to-low potential for dependence and an accepted medical use in treatment, such as Tylenol with codeine, ketamine, and anabolic steroids. The Department of Justice and the Drug Enforcement Administration have initiated the formal rulemaking process to enact this change.

Rescheduling is a major shift in federal drug policy with several key implications:

• Business Challenges: Retailers and cannabis businesses now face narrowing profit margins, as they are forced to absorb part of the tax or risk losing customers by passing the full cost on to consumers. Small businesses may be especially vulnerable, encountering obstacles in maintaining competitive pricing, covering operational costs, and retaining employees. This financial squeeze could threaten the survival of local dispensaries and limit consumer choices.

• General Tax Relief for Businesses: The most immediate impact would be relief from Internal Revenue Code Section 280E. This code currently prohibits state-legal cannabis businesses from deducting ordinary business expenses (like rent and payroll) because they are considered "trafficking" – for tax purposes – a Schedule I substance. Moving to Schedule III would allow these businesses to claim normal deductions, significantly improving profitability and freeing up capital for reinvestment.

• Michigan 24% Cannabis Tax Offset: The new 24% Michigan cannabis tax is a wholesale excise tax levied on licensed cannabis businesses, specifically the entity making the first sale or transfer of adult-use cannabis to a retail licensee. Rescheduling cannabis to Schedule III has significant implications for Michigan. Rescheduling would allow state-licensed cannabis businesses to benefit from tax deductions previously denied under federal law, increasing profitability and economic growth in Michigan's cannabis industry.

For everyday consumers, the steep 24% tax means a substantial increase in the price of legal cannabis products. As a result, many may seek out untaxed, illicit sources, inadvertently fueling the black market and undermining the state's regulatory efforts. This trend could also disproportionately affect medical cannabis users who rely on these products for their health.

The 24% tax will, without rescheduling, increase the financial burden on both consumers and businesses is likely to destabilize Michigan's legal cannabis industry. New entrepreneurs may be discouraged from entering the market, and established operators could scale back investments, slow expansion, or exit altogether. Such instability could stifle innovation and reduce the quality and diversity of available products for consumers.

• Facilitation of Research: Rescheduling would substantially ease the significant regulatory barriers that have hindered scientific research on cannabis's potential harms and benefits. Scientists would face less burdensome DEA requirements, encouraging more institutions, researchers, and federal funding (like from the NIH) to enter the space and generate even more clinical evidence on safety and efficacy.

• Acknowledgment of Medical Value: The change formally recognizes at the federal level that cannabis has an accepted medical use. This could reduce the stigma faced by medical patients and encourage more healthcare professionals to discuss cannabis use with their patients.

• Improved Banking Access: While not guaranteeing full access to traditional banking, the reduced perceived legal risk may encourage more financial institutions to offer services to licensed cannabis operators, which has been a major challenge for the industry.

• Potential for FDA-Approved Products: Rescheduling could encourage pharmaceutical companies to develop FDA-approved cannabis-derived medications, which could eventually be prescribed by doctors and potentially covered by health insurance plans, including Medicare.

Eased research restrictions could empower Michigan's universities and medical centers to conduct groundbreaking studies and attract federal grants, enhancing the state's leadership in medical innovation. The formal recognition of cannabis's medical value could reduce stigma and encourage more healthcare providers in Michigan to discuss cannabis treatment options with patients. Improved access to banking would help Michigan's cannabis businesses operate more securely and efficiently. However, recreational cannabis use would remain federally prohibited, meaning adult-use programs in Michigan would still face legal uncertainty until further congressional action is taken.

It is important to note that rescheduling would not federally legalize recreational marijuana. The manufacture, distribution, and possession of cannabis outside of the new, regulated framework would remain subject to federal criminal prohibitions. State-legal adult-use programs would continue to operate in a gray area of tension with federal law unless Congress passes further legislation.

Michigan consumers and business owners deserve better. MT

Brian Farah is CEO and co-founder of Hello Farms. Headquartered in Au Gres, Michigan, and established in 2020, Hello Farms is a leading producer of sun-grown cannabis, dedicated to sustainable and eco-friendly practices. Nestled across 240 acres, Hello Farms nurtures more than 60,000 plants, ensuring each one thrives under natural sunlight, resulting in high-quality cannabis with a super low carbon footprint.

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Savage Love

The Unraveling

by Dan Savage

Q: I had a *great time at Mr. Mid-Atlantic Leather last month in Washington D.C. For those who don't know, MAL is an annual fetish event for gay men. There is a lot of socializing in the lobby of the host hotel, a lot of shopping in the market, and a lot of kinky play in the hotel rooms. One of the highlights for me was a mummification party. However, things got awkward when I had to explain to my friends that my husband thought I was on a business trip.*

We've been together for 25 years, living a happy life in a very blue college town a very red state. Early in the relationship, he discovered that I am into BDSM when he found some Polaroids and some bondage gear in a duffel bag in the back of the closet. I had planned to tell him, just not at the very beginning of our relationship. Instead of ripping off the BandAid and having the hard conversation two decades ago like an adult, I did what any conflictaverse gay man with a bondage fetish might do: I shoved the whole thing back into a duffel bag and hid it in the closet, hoping it would somehow magically resolve itself. Shockingly, it did not. My kink side never went away even as we created a wholesome, Norman Rockwell home life for ourselves.

Over the years, I've quietly met up with friends for BDSM play. No romance, no emotional cheating — just consenting kinky adults doing consenting kinky adult stuff. I know this is dishonest. I know I should have addressed it sooner. I love my husband, and I want to stop lying. I want to be honest about who I am. I want to talk about future kink activities without detonating our marriage by giving him a full account of my past extracurriculars. How do I come clean in a way that acknowledges the harm, takes responsibility, and gives our marriage the best chance of surviving? And is there any hope of negotiating a future where my kink life can exist aboveboard instead of in a duffel bag in the back of the closet? Can I have my wedding cake and eat it while tied to a chair too?

—Conflicted About Kinky Excursions

A: "I've been cheating on you the entire time we've been together — something I rationalized to myself as 'not cheating' because there was no emotional involvement, just mummy parties with other men — and I'd like to keep getting tied up on 'business trips,' honey, but with your permission, so I don't feel like shit about myself."

That's not something you can un-say, CAKE, and there's a decent chance that saying that out loud ends your marriage… even if your husband knows, which I strongly suspect he does.

A married person might be able to get away with hiding one or two infidelities over the decades, but very few married people can successfully hide decades of routine infidelities from their spouses. So, you're either an astonishingly good liar, CAKE, or your husband knows. Or knows *enough*. He found that duffel bag, he saw those Polaroids, he knows about your gear. Unless your husband is astonishingly dense, CAKE, he knows your kinks didn't disappear with that duffel bag. But there's a difference between *kindasorta* knowing having your suspicions and knowing for sure and having your suspicions confirmed. Even if he *kindasorta* knows or assumes you've been discreetly getting your bondage needs met elsewhere, your husband may have taken some comfort in the ambiguity ("maybe he's been faithful to me and bondage porn is his outlet for this") and being told what he already knows will devastate him.

For what it's worth, I was at MAL too with my husband. We met plenty of married gay couples who live perfectly Norman Rockwell lives back home and have weird, wonderful sexual adventures, together and apart. (I actually popped in on a mummification party for a few minutes.) Gay couples prove every day that the choice between Mayberry and MAL is a false one, as do lots of adventurous straight couples. But you can't have both — or you can't have it on the up and up — unless you're willing to risk everything by leveling with your husband about what you've been doing.

But before you talk to your husband, CAKE, you need to be clear what "above board" means to you. Do you want to be able to have bondage buddies over to the house? Do you want him to come to MAL with you? If he wants a DADT arrangement where your bondage activities are concerned, CAKE, are you prepared to continue keeping this part of your life hidden from him — are you prepared to keep lying to him — but now with his consent? And seeing as you chickened on this convo 25 years ago, there's a good chance you'll chicken out on it again. So, consider putting everything you need and want to say in an email, and then having that conversation. Good luck.

Q: Early 40s married *and monogamous hetero guy here, Dan. My wife and I have started going to nudist spaces over the last year, mostly beaches or day clubs, just to see and be seen. We always come home and have really hot sex afterwards. Lots of dirty talk once we're home about people we saw checking us out, both of us describing the hot people we saw, and things like that. It's been fun. My question, though, is whether it would be ethical for us to host a dinner party or some kind of gathering at our home for other nudists. We would advertise it as non-sexual. It would strictly be a time and place where people could gather in one space, clothes-free. We have drinks and serve apps or dinner or something. It would not be promoted as a sexual thing — no sexual activity would be allowed — but it would definitely fuel the sex we have after everyone left. Would this violate the general rule against bringing other people into your kinks unwillingly? Or is this more like the foot fetishist who works at the shoe store? Does it cross some sort of line, because we would be advertising it as non-sexual. Which it would be! Kind of?*

—Help Our Maybe Ethical Situation

A: There are people — mostly men — who are into suits. Wearing business suits and seeing other men in business suits turns them on. I imagine some of these guys go into finance just so they can go to business meetings where they'll be surrounded by other men in suits. If these guys are lucky enough to have spouses, they no doubt go home from meetings and plow the sexual energy built up during a meeting directly into their loving husbands. There are people — again, mostly men (what is it with men?) — who are into wetsuits. I imagine some of these guys take up scuba diving just so they can splash around with other people's wetsuits before going home and plowing all that sexual energy into their spouses. There are people out there — mostly men — with medical fetishes who go into medicine…

Even if none of this was okay — even if it wasn't okay for someone into business suits to go to a business meeting or for someone into wetsuits to take up scuba diving — how would we possibly control for it? Since there's no way to prevent a business suit pervert from attending a business meeting or a wetsuit pervert from scuba diving, HOMES, we don't even try. So long as a business suit fetishist can behave appropriately in meetings and a wetsuit fetishist can behave appropriately on dives — so long as they can hide their excitement and maintain their composure — they won't be asked to leave the meeting or get tossed off the boat.

The same standard applies to you and your wife: So long as you can maintain your composure at nudist events — so long as you aren't visibly aroused at your dinner party, HOMES, so long as you don't make your guests uncomfortable — you're allowed to find the atmosphere arousing. And you're allowed to plow the erotic energy you derive from your nudist dinner party into the wife once the guests are gone, the dishes are done, and the towels you placed on the chairs are in the wash.

Secret perving is always permissible so long as pervs keep their perving secret.

Q: I just learned *my boyfriend of three years cheated on me. It was just once, he insists, and it was early in our relationship. I did not find out about this until a month after I gave birth to our son. I found out because he was texting men and when I questioned him, he lied and said he wasn't texting men but he 100% was. (He would do it sitting next to me on the couch.) So, I did deep dive on his phone and caught him on Grindr, Taimi, and Adam4Adam. I saw stuff — chats with men — going back to before we met. I was worried that I would be one of those wives whose husband comes out gay and leaves her after the kids go to college. Last night I finally got him to talk about it. He says he has been sleeping with men since the age of eighteen. He cheated on his ex-wife and all girlfriends before me with men. But he insists he only sleeps with men because he likes having his prostate stimulated. He swears he isn't attracted to men. He says the proof is he can only stay hard for gay men if he jacks himself off while he is getting "topped." He says since we were together, he would "mostly" use one of my toys up his butt and jack off looking at pictures of men and reading texts from men, but he wasn't actually meeting up with men anymore except for that one time. He says he only slept with men in the first place because he was too afraid to ask a woman to "play with his butt." He swears he's not attracted to men at all. I am so confused.*

—Straight Husband And Gay Sex

A: Your husband's story is no straighter than he is.

P.S. I'm really sorry this came out — if you'll pardon me the expression — after you had a child with this faggot. You now face a choice between staying with your husband and creating a functional, healthy companionate relationship with him (which will require turning a blind eye to the dick he's catching on the side) or divorcing him and creating a functional, healthy, co-parenting relationship with your ex-husband. But there's nothing to be confused about, SHAGS: your husband is gay, and he's been hooking up with other gay men the entire time you've been together. He cheated on his ex-wife with men, he cheated on every girlfriend he's ever had with men, and he's going to keep cheating on you with men. My God, SHAGS, your husband is on a queer hookup app that I've never heard of — *Taimi?* — which makes him gayer than me.

P.P.P.S. If you stay with him and turn a blind eye to the dick he's catching — if you decide that tolyamory is right for you — feel free to get out there, when you can, and catch some quality straight dick for yourself.

P.P.P.S. I shared your letter with Kelly Foster Lundquist, the author of *Beard,* an incredibly insightful, deeply informed, and very funny memoir about her first marriage, SHAGS, which was to a closeted gay man.

"It can be so destabilizing to feel like a person who's that close to you hasn't been honest about who they are," Lundquist replied. "It can rob you of the ability to trust your own perceptions and intuition. I also can't imagine a more vulnerable time to be wrestling with all of this than when adjusting to life with a newborn. If I were you, I would need a lot more explanation about why signing on to all the apps and hooking up with men was easier for him than letting you or any of the other women he's been with know he wanted his butt played with. That's the part I'm having trouble squaring. I hope, no matter what you decide, that you and your newborn get some sleep and that you feel safe and loved."

Follow Kelly Foster Lundquist on Instagram @KellyFosterLundquist. For more about her work, readings, and tour dates, go to kellyfosterlundquist.com. MT

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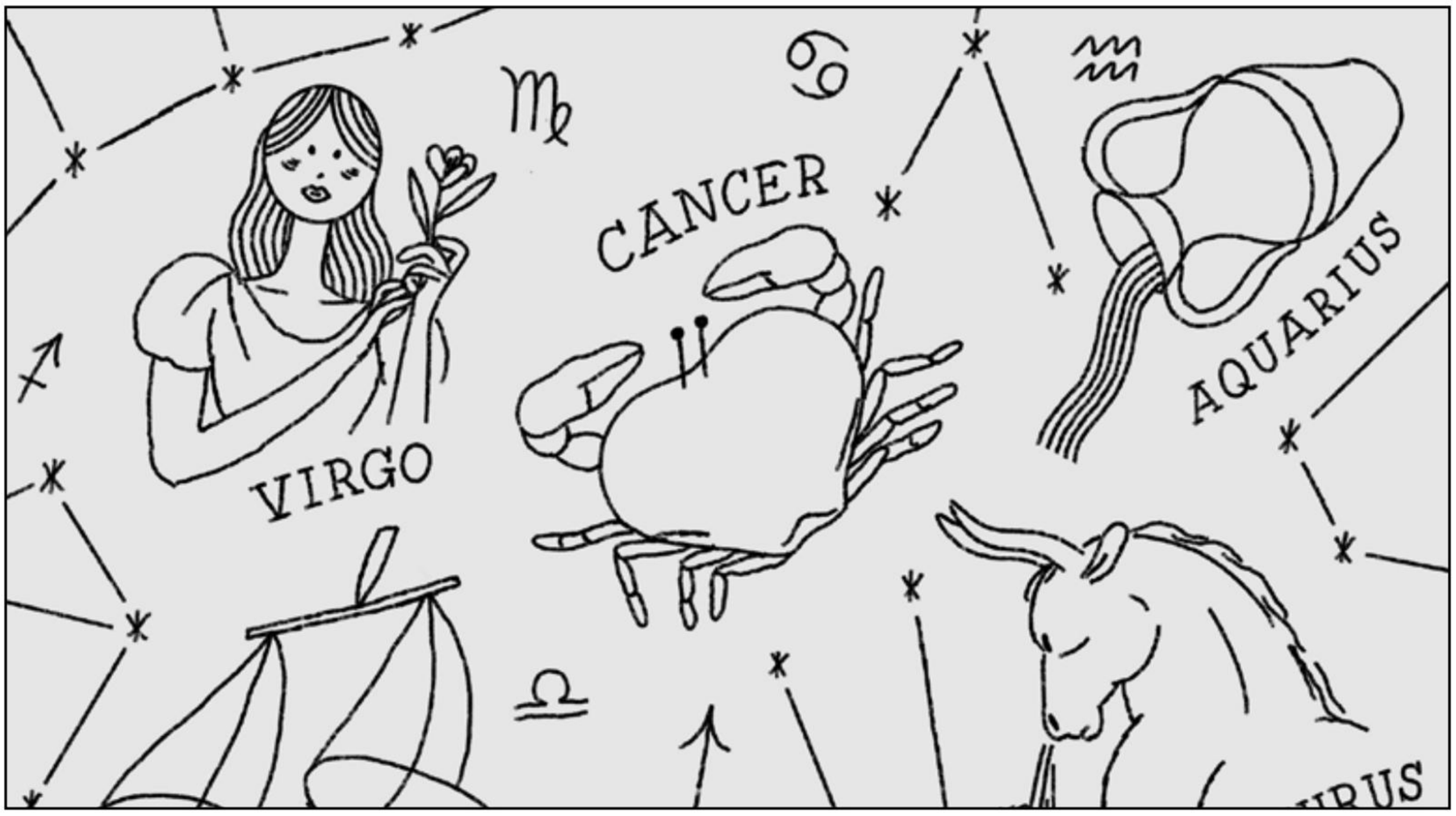

JAMES NOELLERT

ARIES: March 21 – April 19

Saturn has entered Aries. I see this landmark shift as being potentially very good news for you. Between now and April 2028, you will have enhanced powers to channel your restless heart in constructive directions. I predict you will narrow down your multiple interests and devote yourself to a few resonant paths rather than scattering your intense energy. More than ever before, you can summon the determination to follow through on what you initiate. My Saturn-in-Aries prayer: May you be bold, even brazen, in identifying where you truly belong, and never settle for a halfcertain fit.

TAURUS: April 20 – May 20

I am issuing a Wow Advisory. Consider this your high-voltage wonder alert. Your future may offer you thrilling quests and epic exploits that could be unnerving to people who want you to remain the same as you have been. You will have a knack for stirring up liberating encounters with lavish pleasures and rich feelings that transform your brain chemistry. The rousing mysteries you attract into your sphere may send provocative ripples through your own imagination as well as your web of allies. Expect juicy plot twists. Be alert for portals opening in the middle of nowhere.

GEMINI: May 21 – June 20

In Leonardo da Vinci's notebooks, you find anatomical drawings next to flying machine designs, mathematical calculations alongside water flow observations, and philosophical musings interrupted by grocery lists. He moved from painting to engineering to scientific observation as curiosity led him. Let's make him your inspirational role model for now, Gemini. Disobey categories! Merge categories! Mix and match categories! Let's assume that your eager mind will create expanded knowledge networks that prove valuable in unexpected ways. Let's hypothesize that your cheerful rebellion against conventional ways of organizing reality will spawn energizing innovations in your beautiful, mysterious life.

CANCER: June 21 – July 22

In falconry, there's a practice called "weathering." It involves regularly exposing trained birds to the wild elements so they don't become too domesticated and lose their wildness. The falconer needs a partner, not a pet. Does that theme resonate, Cancerian? Is it possible that you have been too sheltered lately? Either by your own caution or by well-meaning people who think they're protecting you? Let's make sure you stay in touch with the fervent, untamed sides of your nature. How? You could expose yourself to an experience that scares you a little. Take a fun risk you've been rationalizing away. Invite touches of rowdiness into your life.

LEO: July 23 – August 22

The loudest noise in history? It was the 1883 volcanic eruption of Krakatoa in Indonesia, heard thousands of miles away. The pressure wave circled the Earth multiple times. I am predicting a benevolent version of a Krakatoa event for you in the coming months. Not literal loudness, but a shiny bright expression of such magnitude that it redefines your world and what people thought was possible from you. Can you be prepared for it? A little. You'll be wise to cultivate visionary equanimity: a calm willingness to stay focused on the big picture. I predict your big boom will be challenging but ultimately magnificent and empowering.

VIRGO: August 23 – Sept. 22

Buddhism teaches about "near enemies": qualities that may appear to be virtues but aren't. For example, pity masquerades as compassion. Clingy attachment pretends to be love. Apathy and indifference pose as equanimity. In the coming weeks, Virgo, I hope you won't get distracted by near enemies. Your assignment: Investigate whether any of your supposed virtues are actually near enemies. After you've done that, find out if any of your so-called negative emotions might harbor interesting powers you could tap into.

LIBRA: Sept. 23 – Oct. 22

Many intelligent people think astrology is dangerous nonsense perpetrated by quacks. For any horoscope writer with an ego, this affront tends to be deflating. Like everyone else, we want to be appreciated. On the other hand, I have found that practicing an art that gets so much disdain has been mostly liberating. It's impossible for me to get bloated with excess pride. I practice astrology for the joy it affords me, not to garner recognition. So in a backhanded way, a seemingly disheartening drawback serves as an energizing boon. My prediction is that you, Libra, will soon harvest an analogous turnabout. You will draw strength, even inspiration, from what may ostensibly appear to be a liability.

SCORPIO: Oct. 23 – Nov. 21:

Mycologist Paul Stamets claims mushrooms taught him to think in networks rather than hierarchies. He sees how everything feeds everything else through vast webs of underground filaments. This is Scorpio wisdom at its most scintillating: homing in on the hidden circuitry working below the surface; gauging the way nourishment is distributed incrementally through many collaborative interconnections; seeing the synergy between seemingly separate sources. I hope you will accentuate this mode of understanding in the coming weeks. The key to your soulful success and happiness will be in how well you map the mycelial-like networks, both in the world around you and in your inner depths. PS: For extra credit, study the invisible threads that link your obsessions to each other, your wounds to your gifts, and your rage to your tenderness.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 22 – Dec. 21

The peregrine falcon dives at speeds exceeding 240 miles per hour, making it the fastest animal on Earth. But before the dive, there's often a period of circling, scanning, and waiting. The spectacular descent is set up by the patient reconnaissance that precedes it. I believe you're now in a phase similar to the falcon's preparatory reconnaissance, Sagittarius. The quality of your eventual plunge will depend on how well you're tracking your target now. Use this time to gather intelligence, not to second-guess your readiness. You'll know when your aim is true.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22 – Jan. 19

There's a certain miracle you could really use right now, Capricorn. But to attract it into your life would require a subtle and simple shift. In a related development, the revelation you need most is concealed in plain sight. To get these two goodies into your life, you shouldn't make the error of seeking them in exotic locales. Ordinary events in the daily routine will bring you what you need: the miracle and the revelation that will change everything for the better.

AQUARIUS: Jan. 20 – Feb. 18

Over the last 4,000 years, a host of things have been used as money in addition to precious metals and paper currency. Among them have been cows, seashells, cheese, tobacco, velvet, tulips, elephant tusks, and huge stone wheels. I hope this poetic fact will inspire your imagination about financial matters. In the coming weeks, I expect you'll be extra creative in drumming up new approaches to getting the cash you need. Here are questions to guide you. Which of your underused talents might be ready to boost your income? What undervalued gifts could you be more aggressive about giving? What neglected treasures or underutilized assets could you use to generate money?

PISCES: Feb.19 – March 20

Big bright transitions are at hand: from thrashing around in the educational mire to celebrating your sweet escape; from wrangling with shadows and ghosts to greeting new allies; from messing around with interesting but confounding chaos to seizing fresh opportunities to shine and thrive. Hallelujah! What explains this exhilarating shift? The Season of Dazzling Self-Adoration is dawning for you Pisceans. In the weeks ahead, you will be inspired to embark on bold experiments in loving yourself with extra fervor and ingenuity.

Homework: *What imperfect but pretty good part of your life deserves more of your love?* MT

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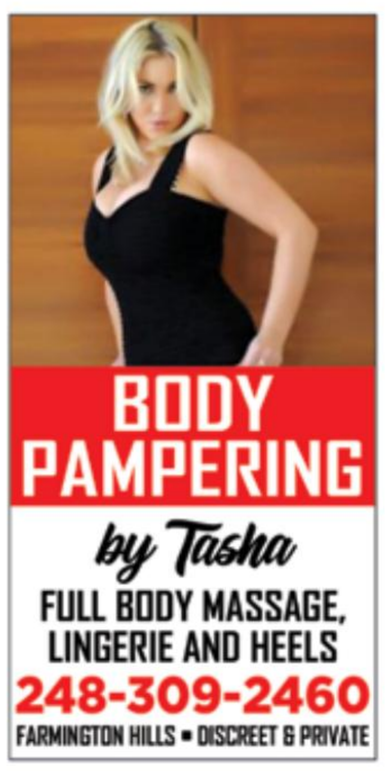

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